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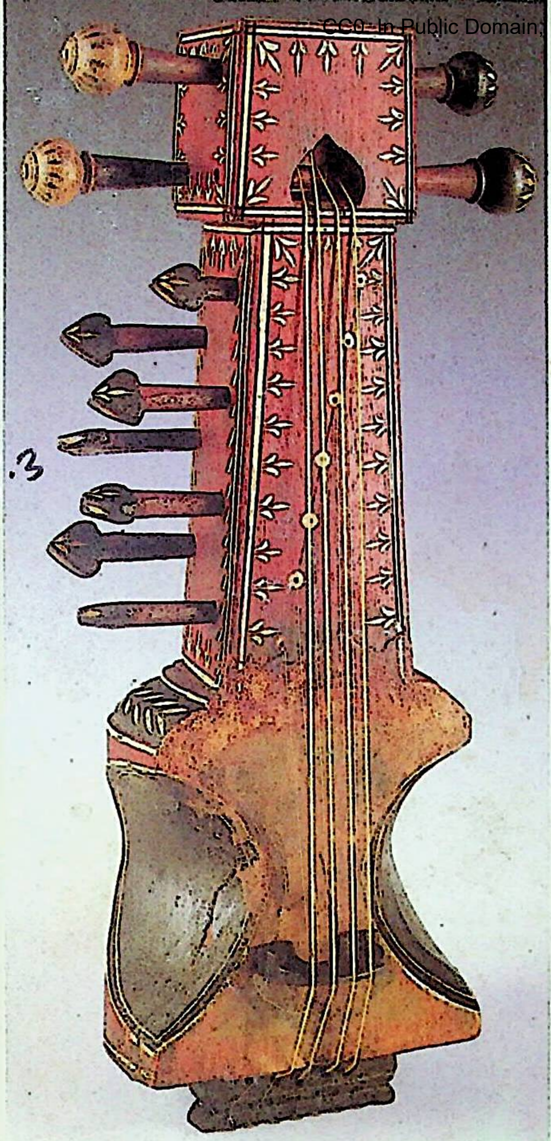
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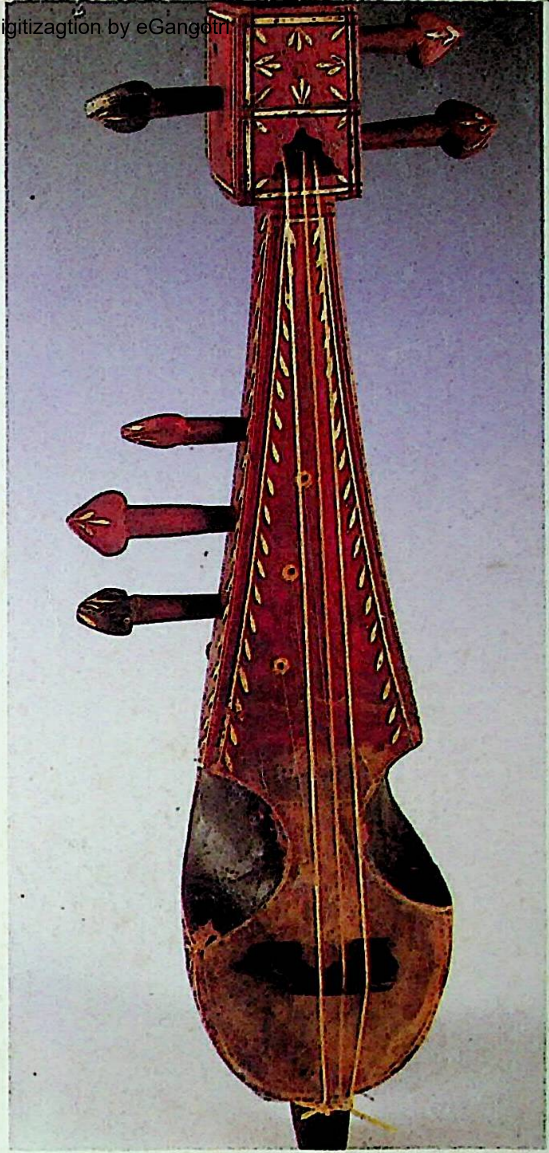
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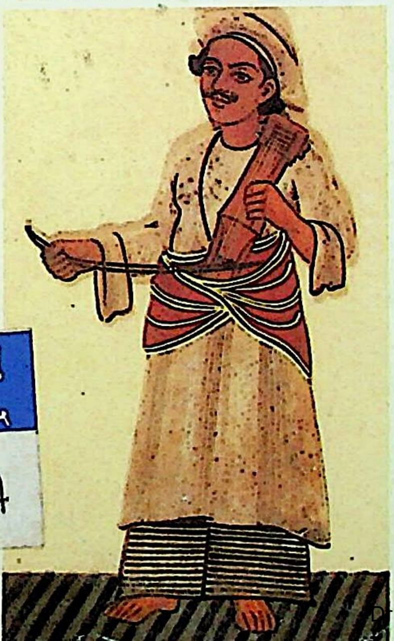
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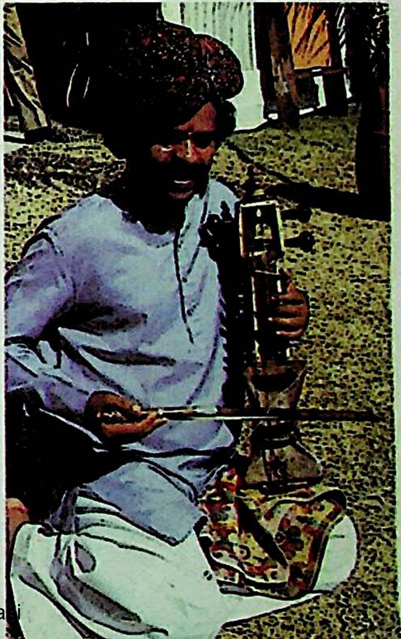
THE VOICE OF THE SARANGI

Joep Bor

Quarterly Journal
Vol. XV, 3 & 4; Vol. XVI, 1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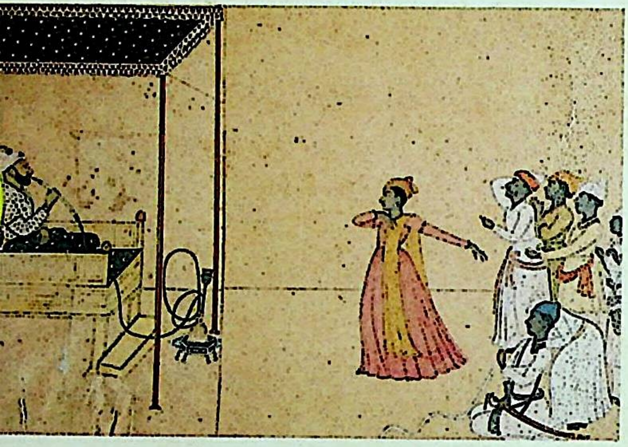

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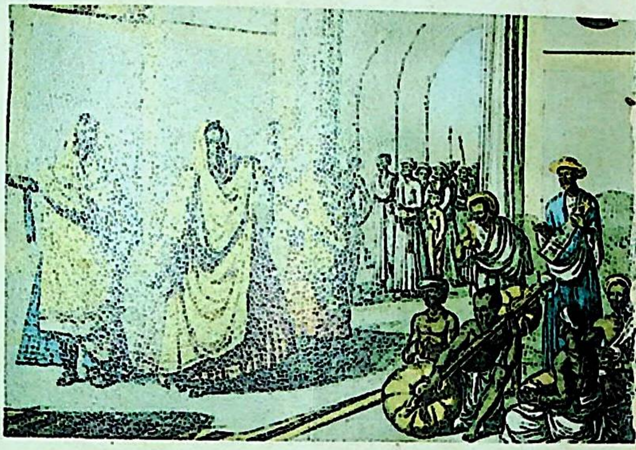

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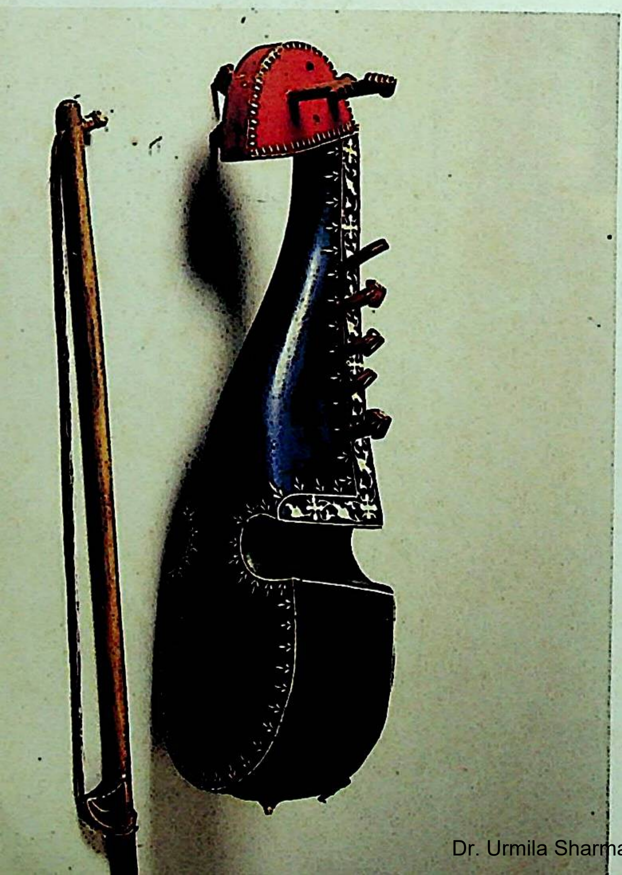

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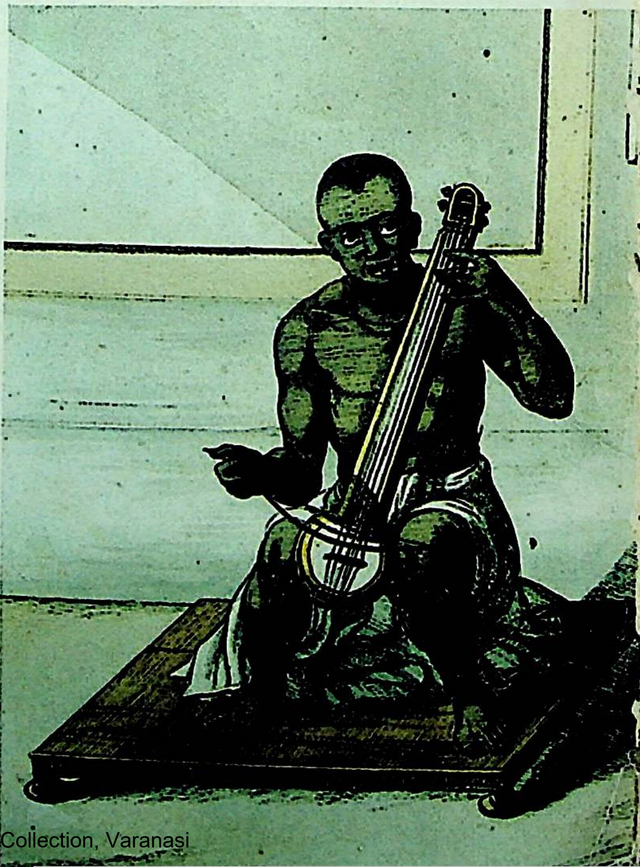

THE VOICE OF THE SARANGI

An Illustrated history of bowing in India

Joep Bor

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आम्नाय-ग्रन्थालय,
भरतनिधि, करौंदी
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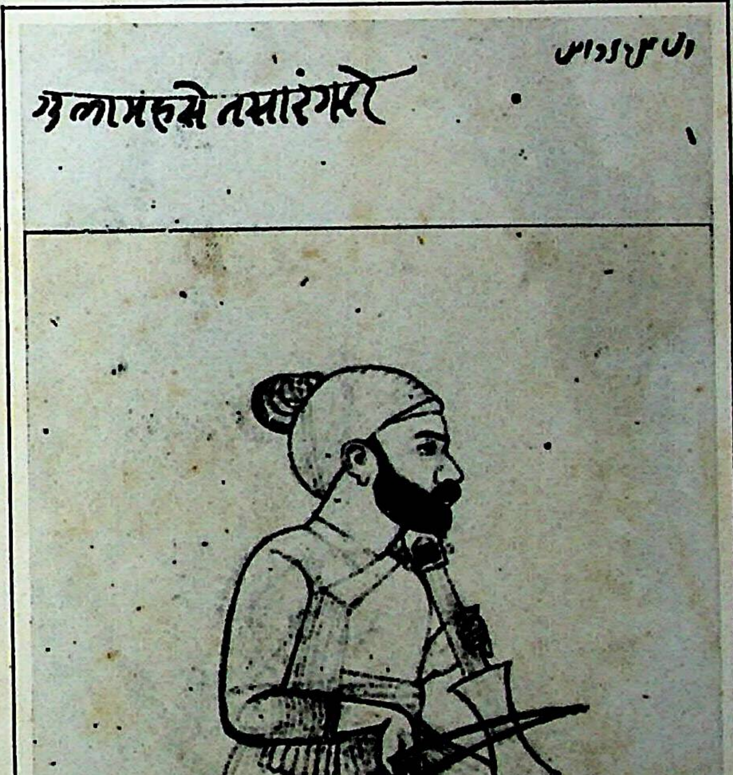

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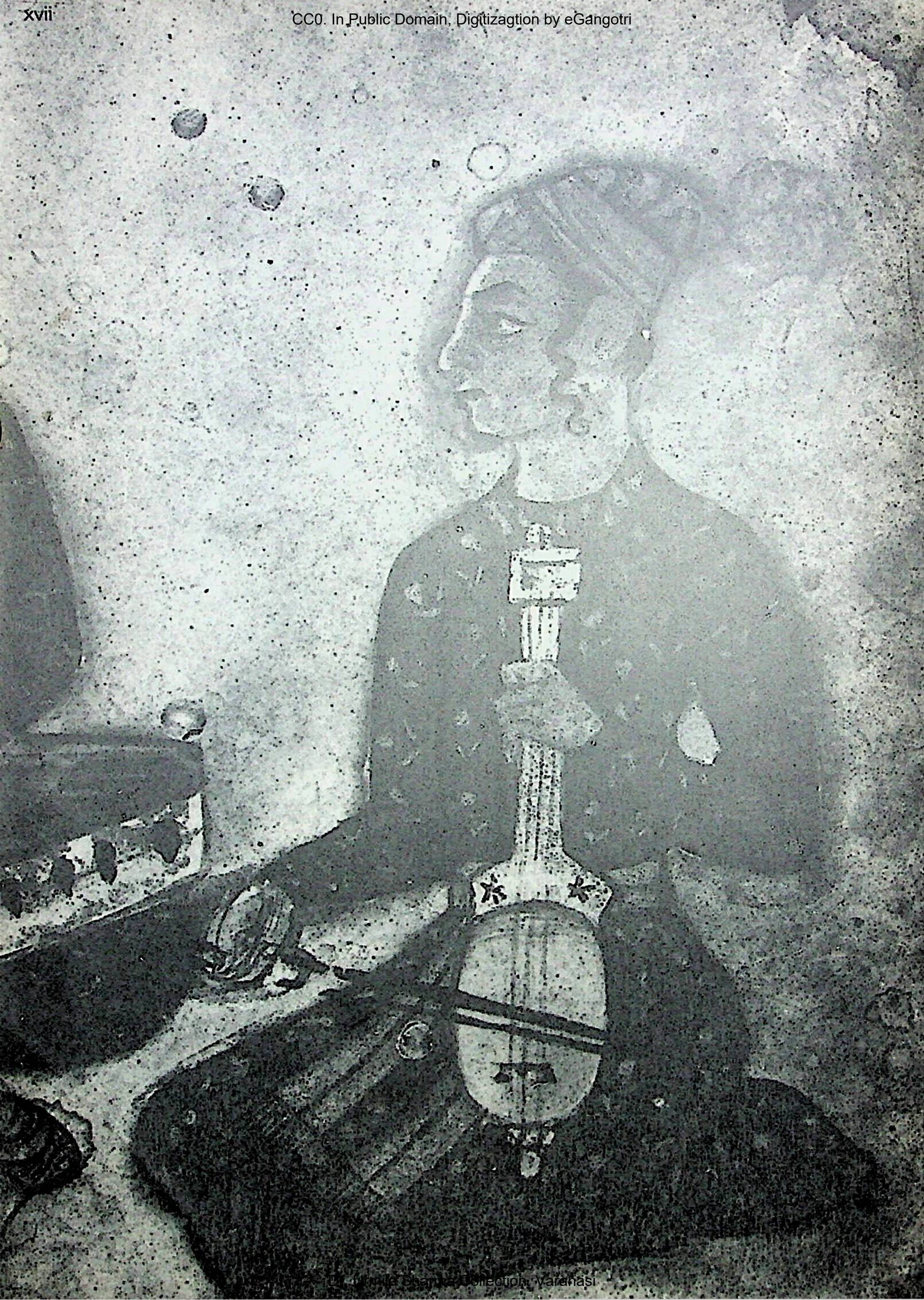

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

आम्नाय-ग्रन्थालय,
भरतनिधि, करौंदी
वाराणसी-5

Quarterly Journal

Vol. XV & XVI Nos. 3, 4 & 1 Sept., Dec. '86 & Mar. '87

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Foreword

We are happy to present before our readers a refreshingly complete work on the *sarangi,* one of the most important and engaging of Indian musical instruments.

Joep Bor's work is complete not in the sense of being the final word on the subject but in the sense of being a work which adopts a very comprehensive approach towards the *sarangi.* An attempt at classification, a description of the folk and classical varieties, an account of the history of the instrument, several references to regional variants, detailed notes on main performers and their views, a serious treatment of the study and practice procedures advocated by prominent artists—all this finds a place in the study. There is hardly an aspect of the subject which may be said to have been entirely left out except perhaps the acoustical examination of the instrument.

Joep Bor has rightly concentrated on the performing rather than the scholastic tradition. This has inevitably led him to the culture of the people making and receiving *sarangi*-music. It is in this context that the interviews of *sarangi*-players assume significance. By quoting extensively their characteristic, direct and pithy views, Joep Bor has succeeded in bridging the gap between the oral and the printed traditions in musical lore. These performers have remarked on aesthetic inclinations, economic conditions, social factors, religious and secular biases, caste preferences and other related topics of general and special interest to music lovers.

As a keen student of the performing tradition, Joep Bor has paid due attention to the aspect of *nikas,* the actual techniques of playing the instrument. The descriptions of bowing and left-hand technique are of vital importance. It is clear that if the contributions of the *gharana*-s and individual geniuses are to be properly described and assessed, the evolution of various techniques has to be traced.

Finally, an indepth study of an instrument assumes special significance in India. Instruments and instrumental music have been placed on a lower rung here on account of various factors. This may explain the comparative scarcity of organological literature. On the other hand, instruments have today created a musical impact that has shaken the hitherto unchallenged primacy of vocal music. It is a demand of the times that instruments are studied with rigour and vigour, and Joep Bor has fulfilled this requirement in ample measure. Years of dedicated study have gone into the data collection and structuring of this book. Clearly he belongs to the tradition of non-Indian scholars, like C. R. Day, N. A. Willard, A. H. Fox Strangways, who have devoted a large part of their working lives to a deeper examination of Indian culture.

The Centre is indebted to Shri Feroze Wadia for his generous donation which has made the publication of this volume possible.

PLDeshpande

P. L. DESHPANDE

PREFACE

> *I thought I had never heard anything more beautiful... As I listened, I seemed for the first time to know something of the inner world about me. I heard in the music the history of vague longings after the unseen and the eternal, the dull resignation to unalterable fate. Then there came strains of vigorous cheerfulness and rustic humour, alternating with hysterical emotion, feverish passion, undisciplined excitement, hatred and despair, and then again monotony and enduring hopelessness. To me it seemed that evening as if the dumb had found a voice, and deaf ears had gained the power of hearing.*
>
> *A. C. Wilson,* A Short Account of the Hindu System of Music, *Lahore & London 1904.*

Twentv years ago, when I first heard the newly-released French LP of Ram Narayan, followed by two old HMV records of Bundu Khan, I had an experience similar to the one described by Lady A. C. Wilson as she listened to the music of a Punjabi sarangi player. I will never forget those moments of ecstasy and joy. It seemed as if the world around me had dissolved and I was listening to music for the first time. But the music I heard was not just a pleasing combination of sounds and rhythms. It expressed a spontaneous dialogue, conveying thoughts and emotions hitherto unknown to me. I was deeply moved and felt the urge to know more about this music and the artists who played it.

My initial efforts to obtain concrete information about the sarangi in literature on music proved rather unsuccessful. How is it possible, I wondered, that such an appealing instrument could have been so completely ignored? Why was not a single sarangi player mentioned on record sleeves of vocalists, when they provided such brilliant accompaniment? At that time I did not realize that these questions would lead to many others, and that, in order to answer them, I would have to study the subject for a great many years.

The first step on this journey—and by far the most important one—was to learn the sarangi from a master. It was extremely fortunate that, when I met Pandit Ram Narayan in 1968, he accepted me as his student. It was he who taught me the basics of sarangi-playing and made me realize that it requires a tremendous amount of patience and hard work to learn to play the instrument. Several teachers followed: the late Ustad Abdul Majid Khan showed me the beauty of old sarangi styles and Pandit Hanuman Prasad Mishra revealed aspects of the Banarsi sarangi.

The person to whom I owe most, however, is the renowned scholar-musician Pandit Dilip Chandra Vedi. He has been more than a guru and has opened up for me a refined world of Indian music and thought that belongs to the past. Although Vediji is a vocalist, he has a deep knowledge of instrumental music and musicians, and has told me more about 20th century sarangi players than most of my other informants.

Whatever I learned from my teachers, and many other artists as well, forms the basis of my understanding of sarangi-playing. This inquiry owes its existence to them. Creative musicians, however, live in the present and even if they have a knowledge of old styles, their repertoire of anecdotes about famous musicians rarely encompasses a period of more than a hundred years. Hence, if one wishes to study the past, one has to spend a lot of time in libraries, bookshops, museums and archives. When hardly anything is known about the history of a musical subject—as is the case with Indian bowed instruments—one ideally requires an acquaintance with many different languages and disciplines such as music, musicology, organology, history, art history, anthropology and so on. Very few people have the capacity to master all these subjects, and I am certainly not one of them. Luckily, I have been in touch with such eminent music historians as Professor Premlata Sharma, Dr. E. te Nijenhuis and Shri Shahab Sarmadee, who shared with me their vast knowledge of Sanskrit and Persian sources and patiently answered my questions. Without their active cooperation it would have been impossible for me to complete the second stage of my search for the history of the sarangi.

If one had to rely merely on the information provided by musical treatises, the history of sarangi could be written in a few pages and would remain very incomplete. Therefore, during the third stage of my study, I began searching for data in a variety of literary sources, including narratives and travelogues, and also began directing my attention to paintings and book illustrations. It is generally known that pictorial sources can give important and reliable information about the evolution of musical instruments, but till now few musicologists in India have seriously and systematically used this material in their studies.

Last year, when Dr. Kumud Mehta asked me to write about the sarangi for the *NCPA Quarterly Journal,* it took some persuasion on her part for me to agree to the request. Despite many years of study and research, I feel almost as ignorant about the subject as when I began. In addition, I have never been able to change my earlier opinion that if one really wants to appreciate the beauty and depth of music, one should either learn, practise, teach or listen to it, rather than write about it. But where can one hear the sarangi nowadays, and where can one learn to play it? Sarangi players, Ram Narayan excepted, have never raised their voice and seem to have resigned themselves to the fact that the sarangi is a dying instrument. For this reason, perhaps, I overcame my hesitation and agreed to write about the history of Indian bowed instruments. As a Westerner, who grew up with the sound of the violin, I am deeply convinced that the art of bowing has reached an equally high level in India and the West. I also believe that there are many wrong notions about the sarangi and that the main reason why this instrument is in danger of becoming extinct is neglect, prejudice and moral condemnation.

Besides my mentors and the scholars mentioned above, I would like to express my gratitude to the following individuals and institutions for their cooperation, friendship and hospitality:

Archaeological Survey of India, Jim Arnold, Dr. Werner Bachmann, Bernard and Adréine Bel, Dr. H. C. Bhayani, Prof. H. W. Bodewitz, Jan Bor, Bruce Carpenter, Linda Daniel, Dr. Kalpana Desai (Prince of Wales Museum), Pt. Nikhil Ghosh, Mia de Haan-van der Chijs, Ustad Niaz Ahmad Khan, Ira Landgarten, Jos Leussink, Nicolas Magriel, Onno Mensink, Dr. Allyn Miner, Issaro Mott, Peter Müller, Prof. Daniel M. Neuman, Sumadi Bambang Oetomo, Regina Pachner, Onkar Prasad, Dr. Ashok Ranade, David Rennie, Rupayan Sansthan, Sangeet Natak Akademi,

Dr. Chandramani Singh, Alexander M. Smit, Bobby Srivastava, Prof. G. H. Tarlekar, Betty Tyers (Victoria and Albert Museum), Dr. P. Voorhoeve and Hans Voskuil.

I owe a special debt to the sarangi players Ustad Hafizullah Khan, Pandit Inder Lal Dhandra, Ustad Masit Khan, Ustad Mohammad Hussain, Ustad Mohammad Jan and Ustad Sabri Khan for the many hours they have spent with me, to Shri Rajesh Bahadur and Ustads Mohammad Sayid and Mohammad Rashid Khan for kindly providing me with valuable information about the great sarangi masters of the past, to Ms. Jane Harvey for editing and Shri D. P. Mainkar for typing the manuscript, to Dr. Kumud Mehta and her assistants Ashwinee, Probhati and Hilda for preparing it for publication, to Ratnakar Sohoni for the artwork, to Shri P. L. Deshpande for writing the foreword, to my colleague Dr. Wim van der Meer and his wife Marilène for their continuous friendship and help at many levels, and to my wife Nancy and son Dion for their patience and love.

Initial training and research were supported by grants from the Indian Ministry of Education and Social Welfare (1974-75) and the Netherlands Foundation for the Advancement of Tropical Research (WOTRO: 1979). For subsequent research in India I have received generous support from the Netherlands Ministry of Culture (WVC: 1984-85, 1986), the International Society for Traditional Arts Research (ISTAR: 1985) and the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR: 1986).

JOEP BOR

1 THE SARANGI FAMILY

1.1 *Classification*

In the prestigious *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians,* the sarangi is described as follows: "A bowed chordophone occurring in a number of forms in the Indian subcontinent. It has a waisted body, a wide neck without frets and is usually carved from a single block of wood; in addition to its three or four strings it has one or two sets of sympathetic strings. The *sarangi* originated as a folk instrument but has been used increasingly in classical music."[1]

Whereas this entry consists of only a few lines, the violin family extends to 72 pages, leading one to conclude that a comprehensive study of the sarangi has been sorely lacking for a long time. A cryptic description like the one above reveals next to nothing about this major Indian bowed instrument, which probably originated at the same time as the violin. It also ignores the fact that the sarangi family comprises the largest number of Indian stringed instruments.

What kind of sarangi did the authors visualize when they wrote these lines? Was it the large classical sarangi or one of the many folk types? In which musical context are these instruments used, and how important is the sarangi player? How does one play the sarangi? Who were the famous masters and what did they contribute? Many such questions arise when one talks about the sarangi. A person from Bombay—assuming he is familiar with the sarangi—may have a different

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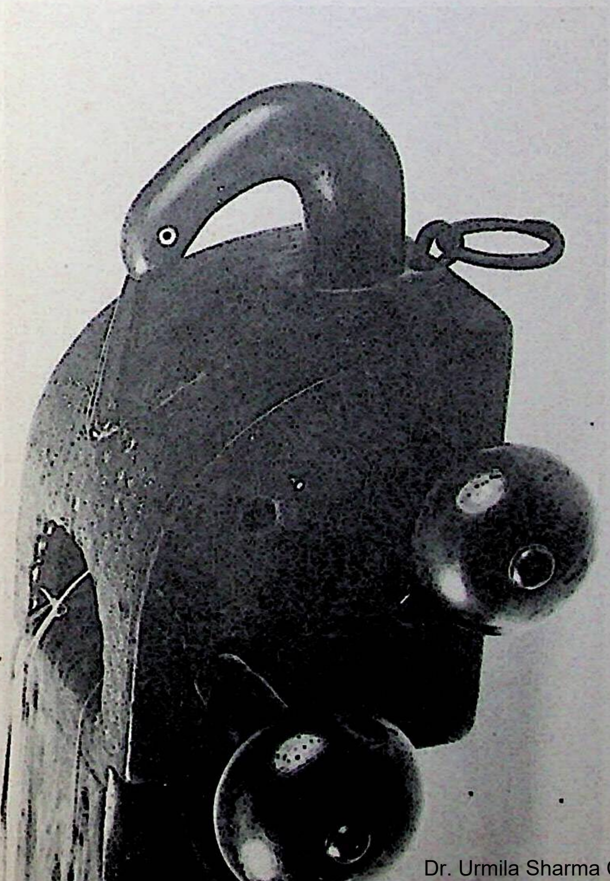

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picture in mind than someone from Jodhpur or Srinagar, or a villager from somewhere in Uttar Pradesh or Nepal. Yet the bowed instruments from all these places, whether they are called *sarangi, saranga, saran, sarinda, saroz* or *sananta,* have something in common. They are all variations of the same theme, like branches of an enormous old tree, whose roots extend into Afghanistan in the west, and Manipur in the east. There are primitive tribal types such as the one-stringed *dhodro banam,* and sophisticated types such as the Sindhi *surando* and the classical sarangi which, according to Yehudi Menuhin, "most poignantly, and in the hands of Ram Narayan, most revealingly expresses the very soul of Indian feeling and thought."[2]

Although there are a great variety of shapes, all the instruments belonging to this family share a number of common features:

- They are carved from a single block of *wood;*
- the *belly* (body) is more or less waisted, hollowed out; and
- partly or wholly covered with a *skin* table,
- on which rests the *bridge,* while
- the *stringholder* is an extension of the base of the belly;
- the *neck* is without frets;
- the *head* (pegbox) is more or less hollow with a characteristic arch-or slit-like opening ('mouth') in the front, and with
- three or four (sometimes one or two) laterally inserted *pegs* for the playing strings;
- they are held vertically (*a gamba*) in front of the chest.

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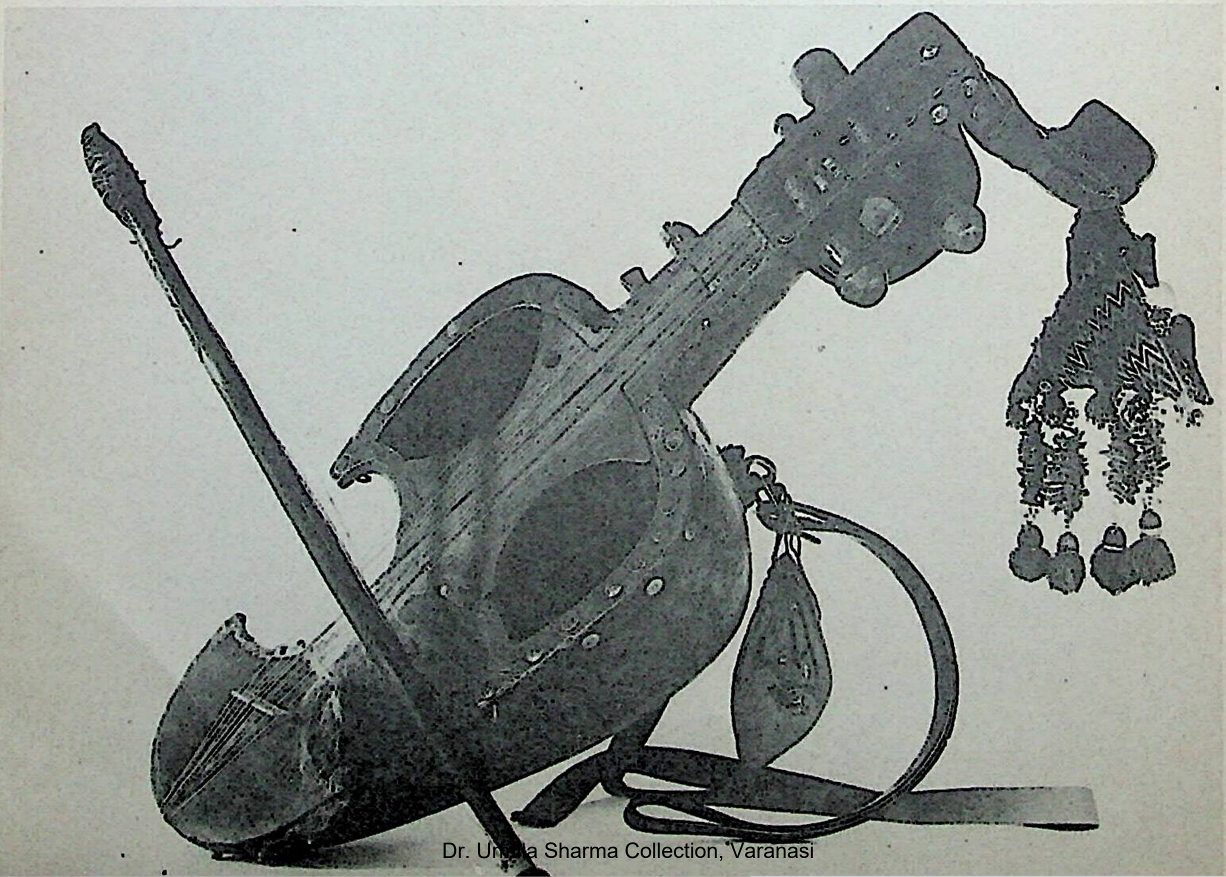

Variations occur in the shape of the belly, the length and width of the neck, and the shape of the pegbox, which is often wonderfully carved, for instance into the figurine of a bird, [1, 2] on the basis of which the instruments can be classified into groups. The size of the instrument, the presence or absence of a number of sympathetic strings (situated under the main strings and supported by the bridge at a lower level), and the playing technique should not be taken into account when separating one type from another. These particular features are variable, even within a well-defined group.

It is indeed remarkable that no two sarangis are alike. This is understandably true for folk sarangis, which always carry the marking of their maker—often the musician himself—and also for classical sarangis. Unlike the *sitar,* for instance, classical sarangis have not yet become standardized, each of them having its own particular characteristics. Some instruments are large and bulky, others slender and light. Some sarangis have a wide waist and others are narrow. Some are handsomely inlaid with ivory, others are plain. Some have 39 resonance strings, others 35, and the smaller instruments 24 or fewer. Even in the instruments built by a particular sarangi maker, one can recognize a variety of shapes and sizes, depending largely on what the artist who ordered the instrument had in mind. If he required an instrument for accompanying male vocalists, he would need a larger sarangi than the one he would use with women singers.

In spite of these variations, a trained observer can recognize where the instrument was built and by whom. Moreover, he can easily make a distinction between different sarangi *species,* such as a Gujaratan, a Jogia or a Sindhi sarangi.

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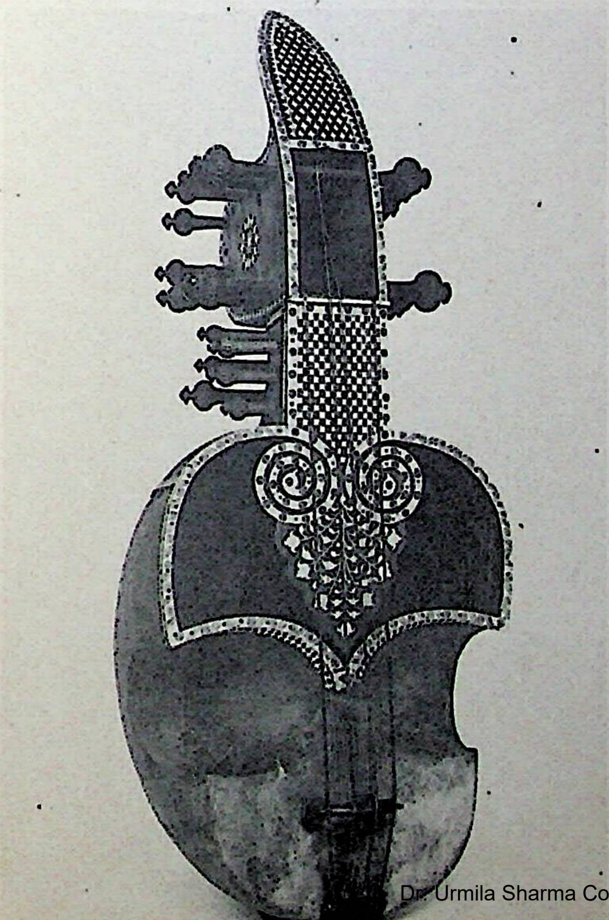

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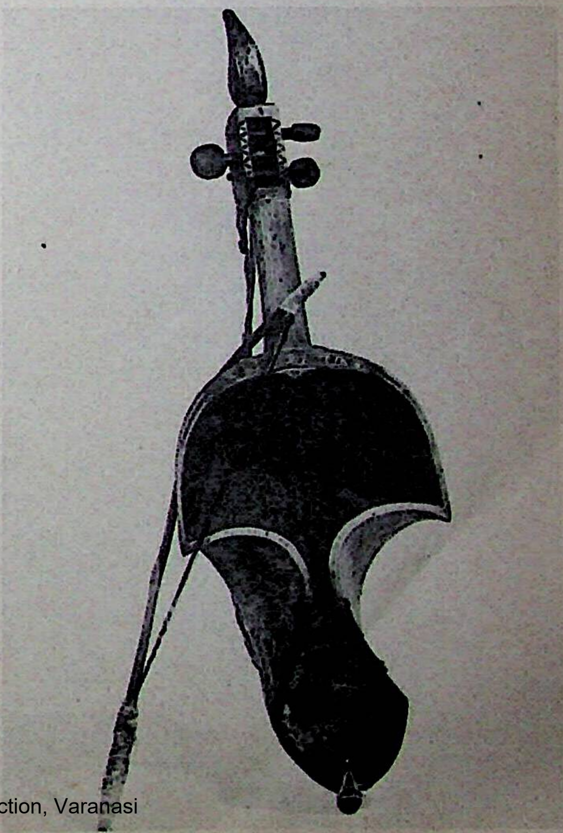
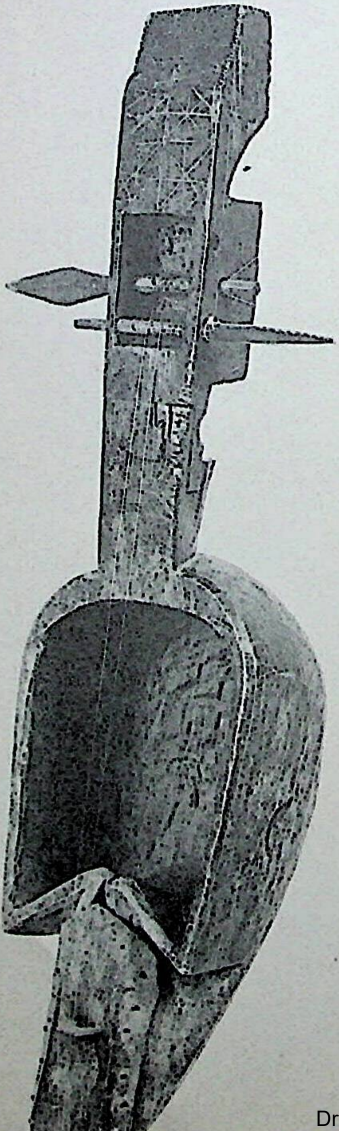
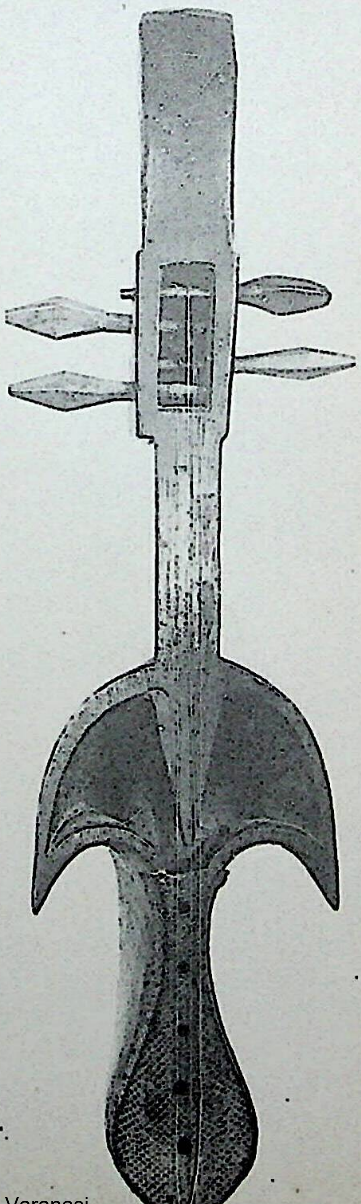


Instruments of one species always have a number of distinguishing features in common (i.e. they are structurally interrelated) and are also limited to a certain location. They are played by well-defined classes of musicians who have preserved the fundamental shape of the instruments over the centuries, and attached a specific name to them, often consisting of two words.[3]

Related species can be ordered into a 'group' (*genus*) which is an artificial category, however, not used by the musicians themselves. Since the 'group' takes only morphological similarities into consideration, it is a subjective class which depends greatly on the intuition of the researcher. Curt Sachs, for instance, although he does not make it very clear, separates *sarindas* from other bowed short lutes in India.[4] K. S. Kothari also makes a distinction between *sarindas* and certain types of sarangis, but he leaves us in the dark about *chikaras*.[5] Depending on the shape of the belly





and neck, this author proposes to classify these instruments into two main groups consisting of three sub-groups which are interlinked through intermediate types.

Although subjective, for theoretical purposes the 'group' is a useful category. It shows that certain types (species) of instruments are closely interrelated and suggests that these types have a common ancestor. As L. Picken puts it:

> Although musical instruments are in most instances artifacts, it is legitimate to refer to their transformation in time as an 'evolutionary' process, based on selection, and analogous to the increasing adaptation of a limb to a particular, specialized function or set of functions. It is the type, rather than the individual, that undergoes transformation—as with biological objects. The analogy with the latter is the more striking inasmuch as the evidence indicates that the process of transformation in instruments is one in which selection operates on relatively small modifications, as in biological selection.[6]

The bowed short lutes which share the nine features listed above are grouped into a family, i.e. the *sarangi family*. In other words, if we refer to 'the sarangi' in a wider sense, for instance in its historical context, it includes instruments which share the above characteristics. If, on the other hand, the term 'sarangi' is used in a narrower sense, for instance in the contemporary context, it refers either to the group of box-shaped sarangis, or the classical instrument as we see it today on the concert platform.

1.2 *Sarindas*

The distinguishing features of this widespread group are a large, deep head, a short neck of approximately the same length as the head, and a ladle- or heart-shaped belly which consists of a lower resonance chamber covered with skin, and a wider, upper chamber, open in the front.

In the *sarinda* species, the beautifully shaped upper resonance chamber functions like a highly arched horn amplifier. In more advanced types—the *saroz* (or *ghichak*) of Baluchistan and the almost identical *surando* of Sind, *surinda* of Rajasthan and *sarinda* of Punjab—the fingerboard descends into this chamber, dividing it into two compartments.[7][3] The three main strings and a variable number of sympathetic strings (usually five or six, laterally inserted into the pegbox) pass over a nut. The first playing string of metal is tuned to the upper tonic *(Ṡa)*, while the middle string of gut is tuned to the tonic *(Sa)* and the lowest string of metal to the fifth *(P̣a)*. Sometimes a few resonance strings are anchored to pegs fastened into the neck. The bridge is placed in an oblique position on the skin table.

N. A. Baloch observes that the *surando* is played by professional Sindhi bards such as the Maganiyars, Charans and Langas.[8]

> These wandering minstrels used to go around playing the *surando* music and putting people's magnanimity and munificence to test. Their demand was not that of an ordinary mendicant, but rather a sort of officious solicitude. They would use the appeal of the melodious *surando* music to

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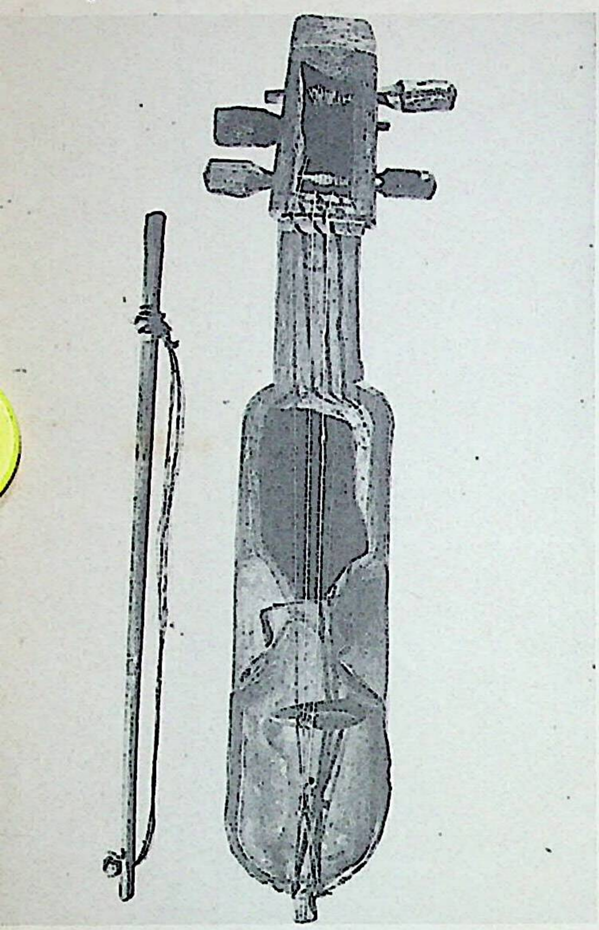

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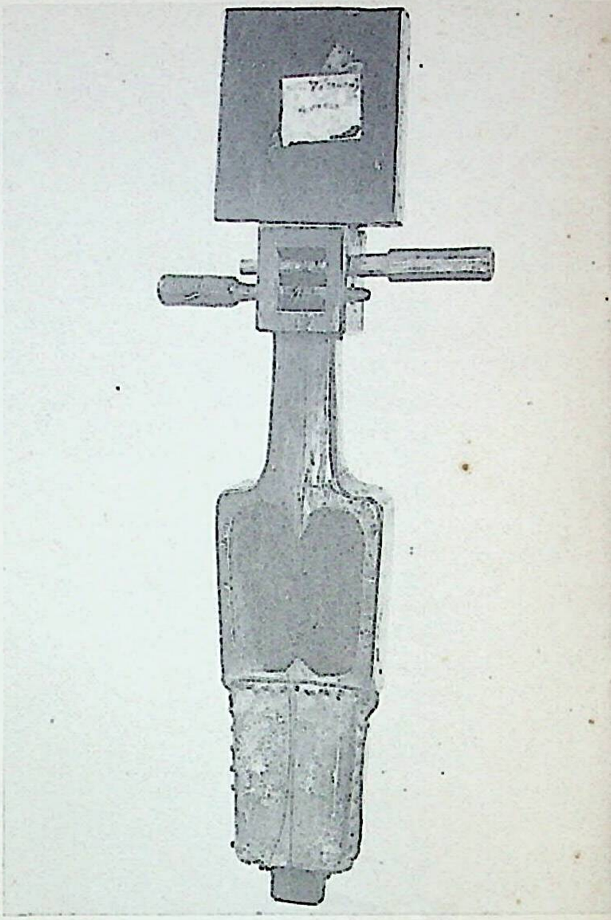

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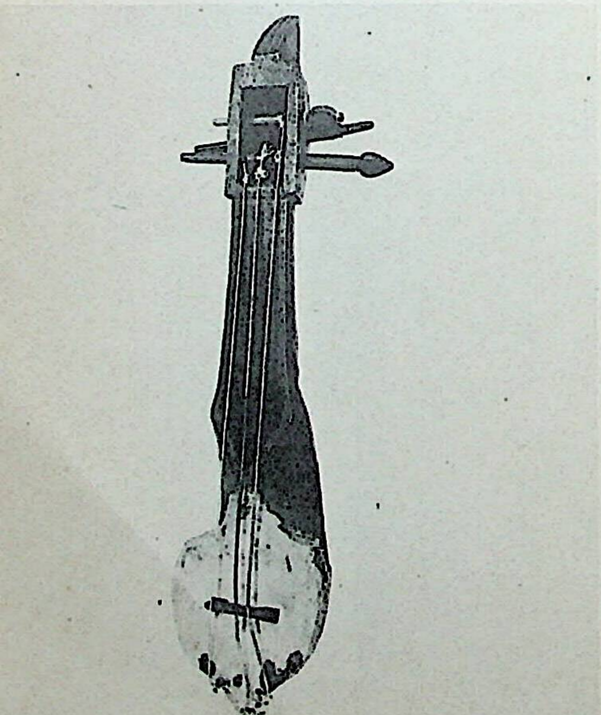

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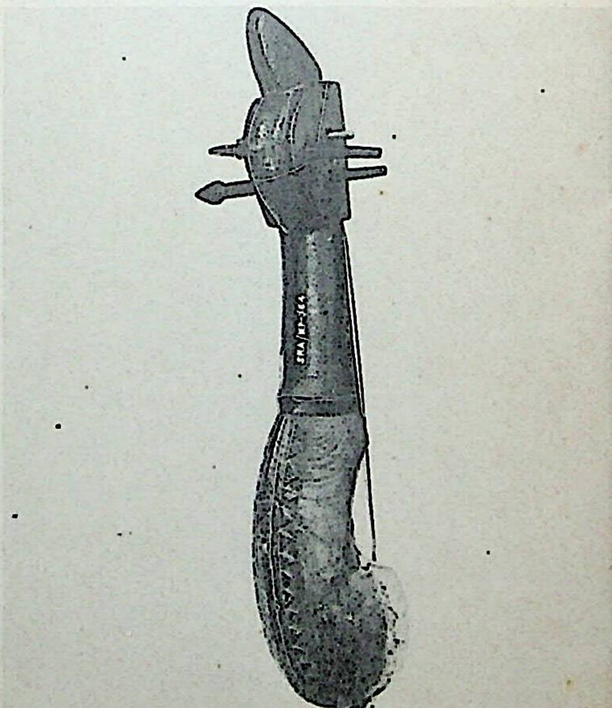

> attain their objectives. According to the tradition, the music of *surando* had a devastating effect when handled by master musicians. Once an accomplished bard, named Bijal, by his superb *surando* music, exercised an overwhelming influence on the Samma Chief, Khanghar, the ruler of Junagadh, and asked for his head as a reward. To please him, and to pay homage to the high art, Khanghar sacrificed his life at the altar of *surando* music.

The sophisticated and highly ornamented *Bengali sarinda* resembles the above types, but it has four playing strings of gut and a larger number of resonance strings. [4] In the more primitive *sarinda* species of north-eastern India (Bengal, Assam, Manipur and Tripura), both the nut and sympathetic strings are missing. [5,6] The three playing strings are of gut, silk or metal. The *sananta* of Manipur has four strings, however, and a table of lizard skin with five soundholes.[9][7]

The name, and at first sight also the shape of the body, suggests that the *Nepali sarangi* would belong to the sarangi group. [8] Yet structurally, this instrument, with its short, massive neck and waisted belly, belongs to the *sarinda* group. It only differs from a *sarinda* in that its upper resonance chamber is reduced in size. The *Nepali sarangi* has four playing strings of metal and gut. The first string *(tip)* is tuned to the fifth *(Pa̤);* the two middle strings *(sur)* are tuned to the tonic *(Sa),* and the lowest string *(ghor)* again to the fifth *(Pa̤).* It is played by professional singers of the Gaine caste who make a living by begging.[10]

Similar in shape is the small *saranga* of Jammu and Kashmir which vaguely resembles a *chikara,* but does not belong to that sub-group.[11][10] The pear-shaped belly is also divided into two compartments, but here the open, upper chamber is narrower than the lower chamber. The belly tapers off into a short neck, but viewed from the back, belly and neck are separated from each other by a collar, a semi-circular protrusion which is a characteristic feature of the skin-bellied lute *(rabab).* [11] The four strings of the *saranga* (two of steel and two of gut) are anchored to lateral pegs in a deep pegbox.

In the *kamaicha (kamacho)* of Rajasthan and Sind, the collar *(agali)* between belly and neck is much more pronounced.[12][12] However, the huge belly of the instrument is bowl-shaped and completely covered with parchment, which is probably why its name is similar to that of the bowed spike lute, the *kamancha.* In other respects, this instrument is related to the western *sarindas.* On the left side of the prominent head there are three large pegs for the main strings of gut, and on the right side eight small pegs for the resonance strings. All these strings pass over a nut and a wide bridge. The *kamaicha* is played by the Manganiyars.

The *dhodro banam* (lit. hollow instrument), played by the Santal tribals of Bihar and Orissa, is popularly known as the *Santal sarangi* and represents the most primitive type. [9] It is made from the wood of the *guloic* tree which, according to legend, grew out of the flesh of a human being. "Hence the Santals consider this instrument organically related to them."[13]

The *banam* consists of four parts: a belly *(lac)* covered with skin on which rests the bridge *(sadom,* lit. horse), an open chest *(koram),* a short neck *(hotok)* and a head (*bohok*) with one ear (*lutur*), i.e. the peg. The pegbox is either cube-shaped or indeed carved in the form of a human head. V. Shirali has depicted a number of such instruments which are genuine masterpieces of primitive art.[14]

If nothing were known about the history of Indian bowed instruments, the one-stringed *banam* with its box-shaped resonator could easily be thought to be an ancestor of the sarangi. However, we will see that it is very unlikely that the sarangi originated in eastern India. Rather than representing a 'living fossil', the *dhodro banam* is a regressive form of the *sarinda*. In a personal communication, Onkar Prasad supports this view:

> This I assume on the basis of a reference to the Jugi (yogi) as its mythical inventor, who uses the instrument to beg. A parallel can be observed in Hindu society where the followers of Raja Gopichand (a mythical figure) and Bhartrhari (a historical figure), known as yogis, are to be seen travelling around with a sarangi, begging in the villages of northern India, particularly Bihar . . . It is not so surprising that the Santals, who were always in close contact with the Hindus, derived the idea of constructing such an instrument from them. To support my argument, I would like to add the following observation which I made in and around Shantiniketan—Shriniketan. A few Santals there have copied a Western violin which they probably saw in the house of a Bengali . . . Their violins are usually one-stringed and much cruder and simpler in shape than the Western ones.

Although it is difficult to indicate the place of origin of the *sarinda*, it is obvious that this instrument reached its highest development in the area covering the Punjab, Rajasthan, Sind, Baluchistan, Afghanistan and the eastern provinces of Iran. Most probably it migrated from there to the east of India. "There is little

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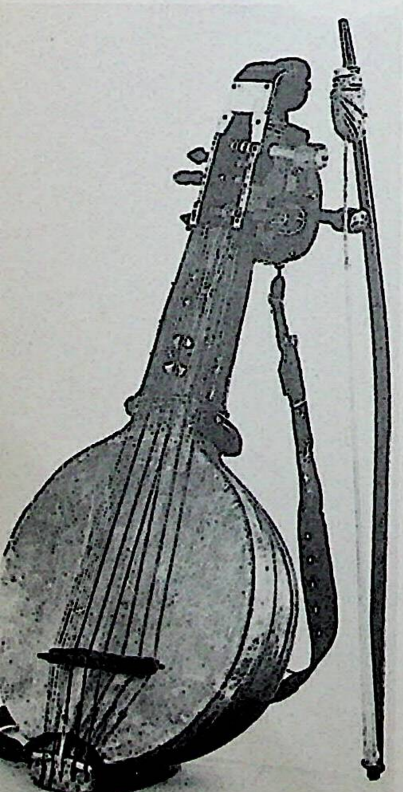

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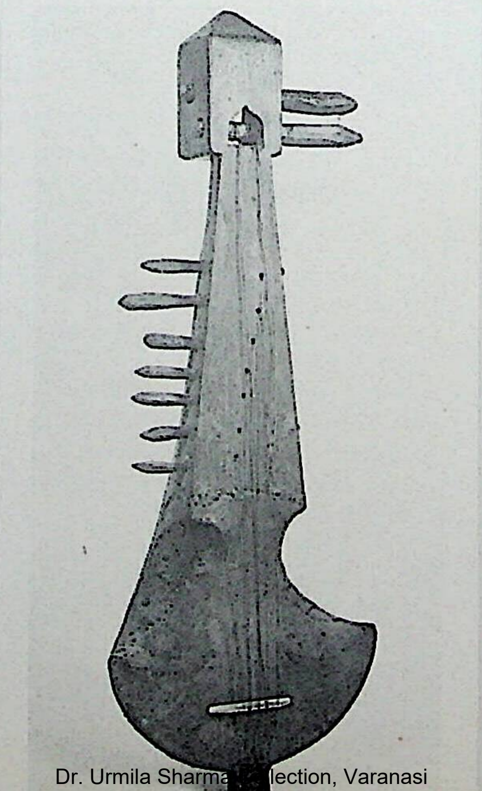

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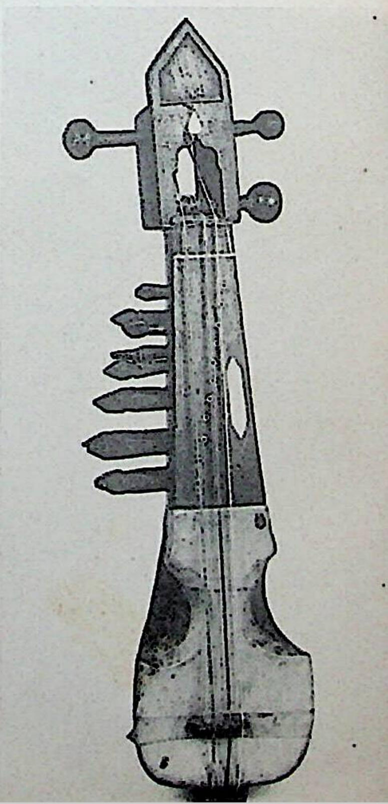

doubt", writes Curt Sachs, "that these fiddles came from a horse-breeding country in Central Asia."[15] The Kazakh *kobyz*, the *kobuz* of north-western Uzbekistan and the Kirghiz *kiyak* are indeed closely related to the *sarinda*. In these instruments, the lower resonance chamber of the belly is closed by a piece of skin, whereas the upper chamber is round (in the *kiyak*) or heart-shaped (in the *kobyz* and *kobuz*), and open in the front. The neck is short but arched, and the large, massive head has two laterally inserted pegs. In the *kiyak*, the strings of unwound horsehair are "tuned a fourth or a fifth apart . . . [and] not pressed against [the neck] in playing, so the sounds produced are actually the harmonics."[16] "Formerly", writes K. Vertkov, "the *kobyz* was the instrument of *bakhsys* (witch-doctors) and only men were allowed to play it."[17]

An instrument which has probably become extinct, the *derh* (*pasli*) *sarangi* of Punjab and Rajasthan, is an interesting intermediate type between the *sarinda* and sarangi groups. The body consists of an upper resonance chamber which is open and oval in shape (like the *kiyak*), whereas the much narrower lower chamber is covered with parchment. However, the neck is much longer than that of a *sarinda*, and the pegbox is cube-shaped. B. H. Baden Powell (1872) reports that "it has four strings, three of steel wire, and the fourth of thick twisted copper wire, and is played with a rude bow. This instrument is only to be found in villages, and is said to be much used in Marwar."[18]

1.3 *Folk sarangis*

The sarangi group, which includes the largest number of types and the most advanced Indian bowed instruments, can be divided into two sub-groups. The first one consists of *chikaras*,[19] which have the following distinguishing features: a pear-shaped, waisted belly, completely covered with skin, gradually tapering off into a hollowed-out neck of approximately the same length as the belly. The head is relatively small, and rectangular or trapezoid in frontal aspect. Usually there are three playing strings of metal or gut, and the nut is often missing.

The *chikara* played by the Meos of Alwar district in Rajasthan represents one of the more primitive types.[20] It has only three metal playing strings. Equally crude is the *chikara* of the Pradhans of Madhya Pradesh, in which the neck is a little longer than the body. Besides the three main strings of twisted wire, there are three resonance strings.[21] Another tribal *chikara* of Madhya Pradesh has only two main strings of bronze and steel, but seven resonance strings.[22][13] The shape of its belly is like that of the *sarinda*, but upside down.

More advanced *chikaras* are sometimes referred to as sarangis or *kingras*, and often played by fakirs or yogis, mendicant musicians who beg and sing religious songs.[14] In addition to the three playing strings of horsehair or gut, there are five to eleven sympathetic strings, which are anchored to pegs mounted in the neck.[23] Some of these instruments are beautifully decorated. [vii, xii]

Unlike the *chikara*, sarangis are characterized by a half-cylindrical, box-shaped belly (covered with parchment), the sides of which are more or less incurved in the front, and a hollow neck of approximately the same length as the belly, but clearly separate from it. In the cubic head there are three or four lateral pegs to which the main strings are attached. Although no comparative study of folk sarangis exists, it would appear that the majority of such fiddles are to be found in north-western India, particularly in Rajasthan. The large *chempreng* of Tripura seems, therefore, out of place. Its belly is shaped like a half-cylinder but not waisted, and covered by the epidermis of a palm leaf.[24]

One of the most archaic-looking sarangis is played by the Pauva of Sihori district in Rajasthan.[25] The pegbox is carved like a face, and the three strings (hanks of horsehair) seem to represent a tongue sticking out of a grinning mouth.

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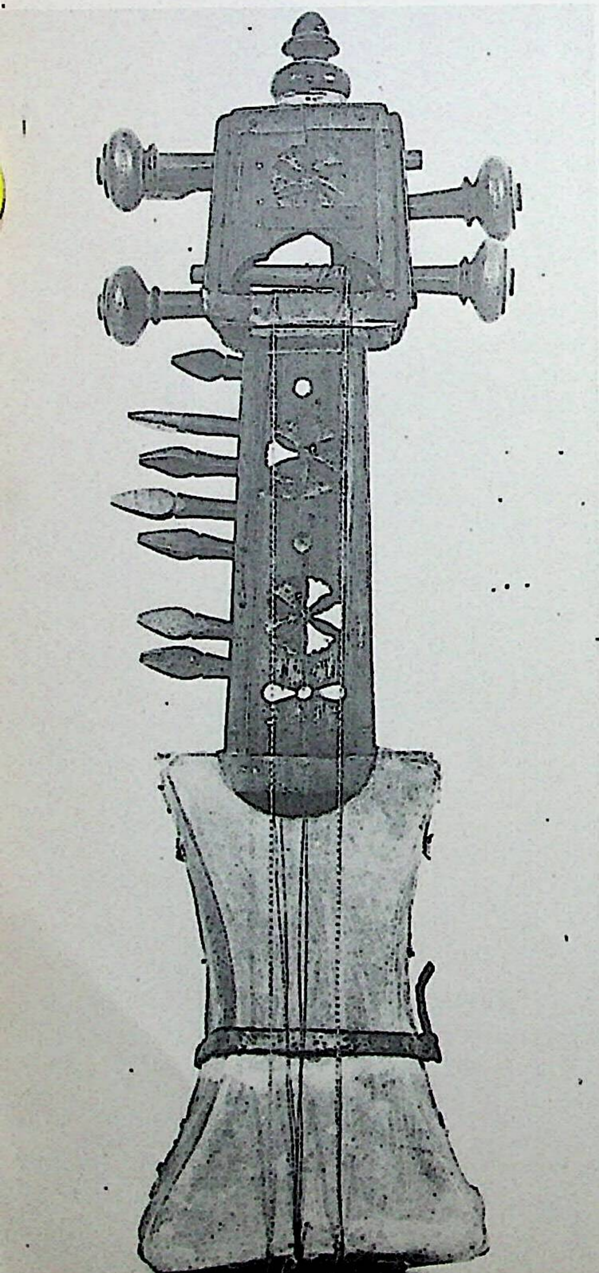

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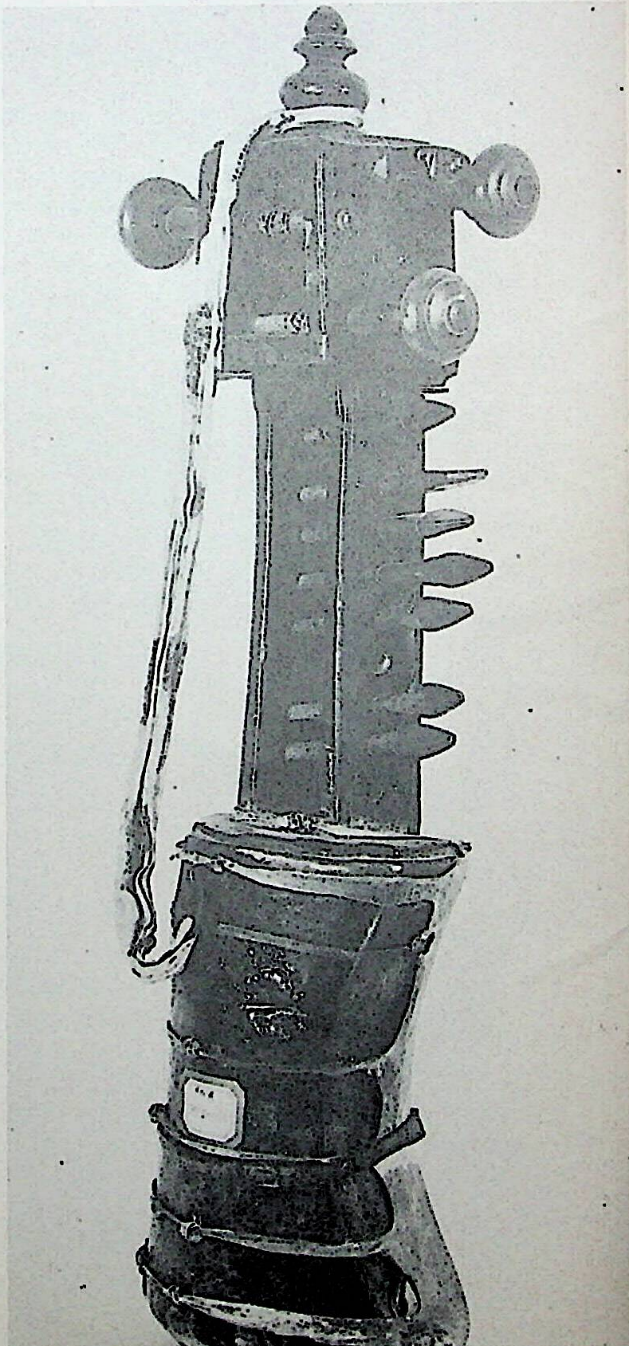

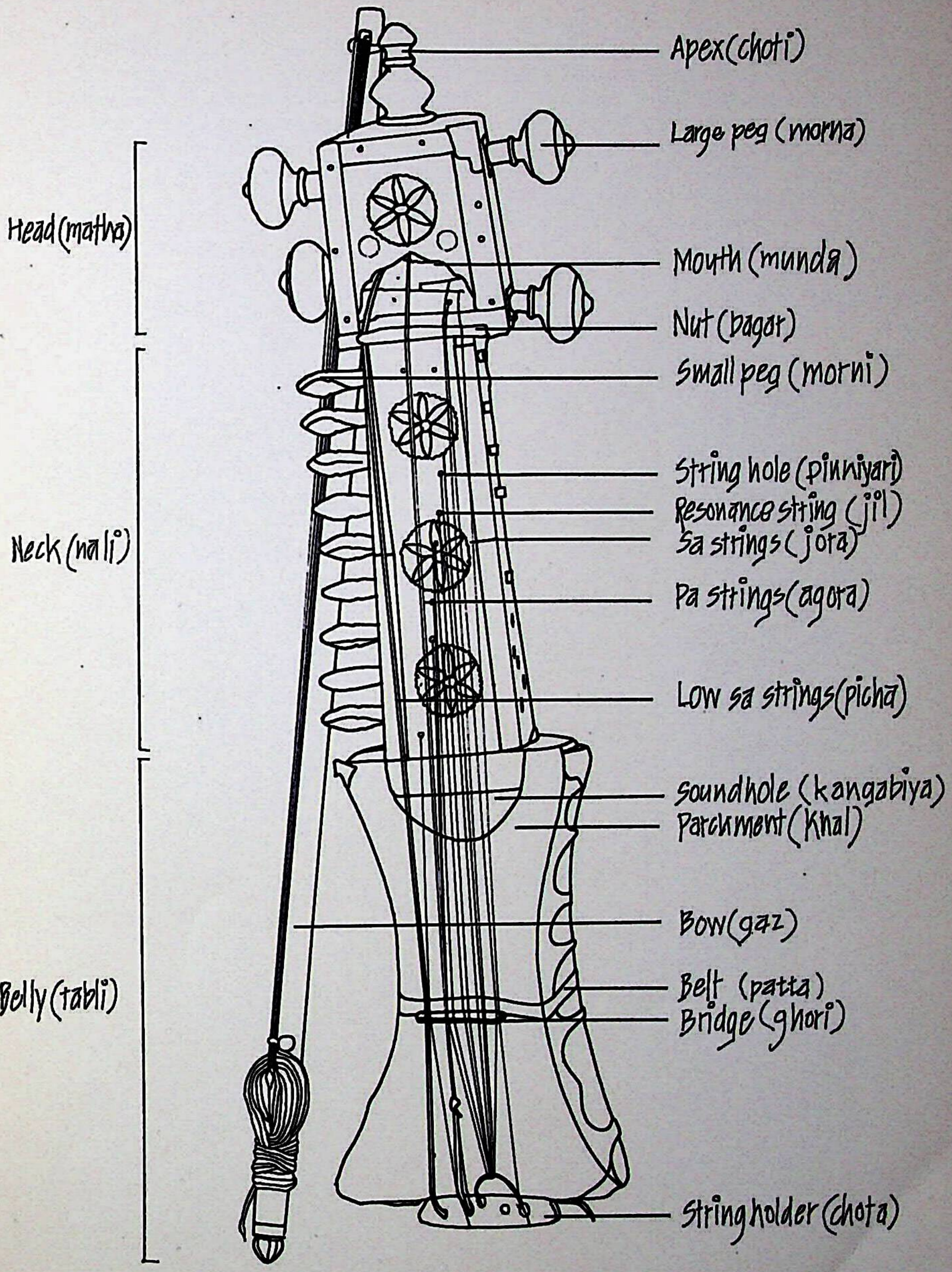
Apex (choti)
Large peg (morna)
Head (matha)
Mouth (munda)
Nut (bagar)
Small peg (morni)
String hole (pinniyari)
Resonance string (jil)
Sa strings (jora)
Neck (nali)
Pa strings (agora)
Low sa strings (picha)
Soundhole (kangabiya)
Parchment (khal)
Bow (gaz)
Belly (tabli)
Belt (patta)
Bridge (ghori)
String holder (chota)

The parts of a Gujaratan sarangi

The *Gujaratan sarangi* of Rajasthan is a much more sophisticated fiddle, and the prototype of the classical sarangi. [15, 16, xviii] It is played by the Langa musicians who inhabit the desert area, and must have survived virtually unchanged for hundreds of years.[26] The head (*matha*) of the Gujaratan sarangi has four large pegs (*morna*) to which are attached two strings of steel, and two of gut. From the mouth (*munda*, lit. head) they pass over a nut (*bagar*), down to the main bridge (*ghori*), and are fastened to the base stringholder (*chota*).

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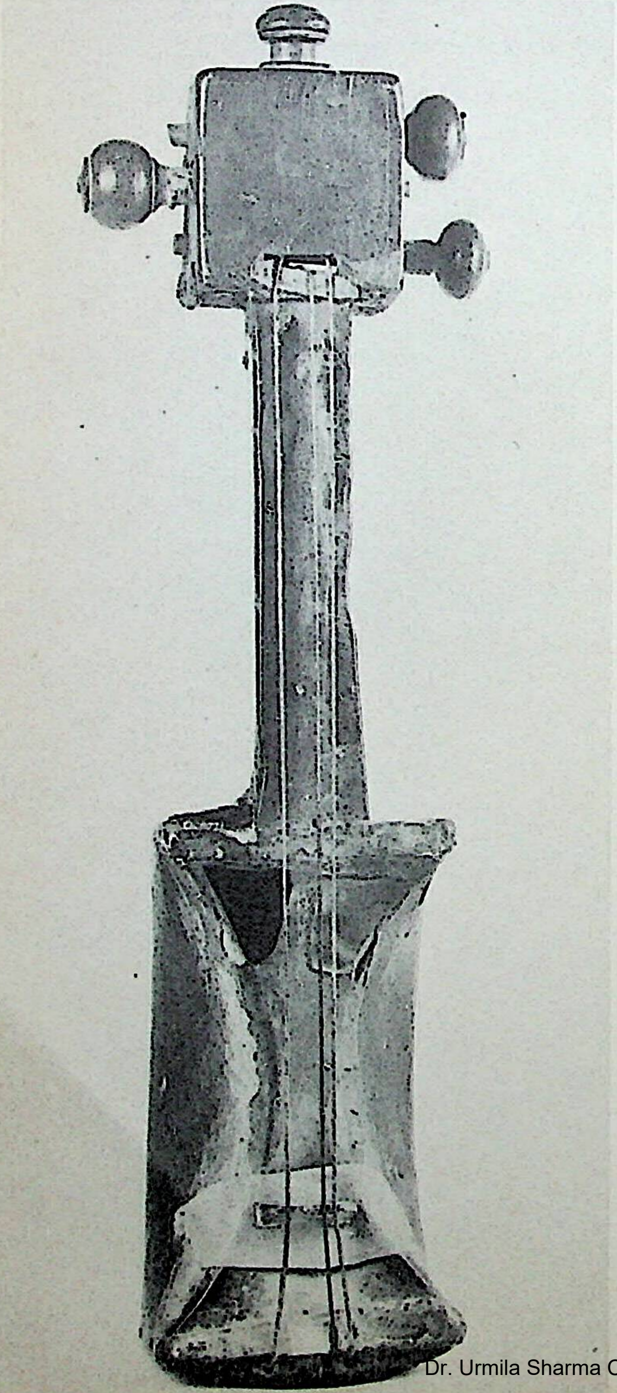

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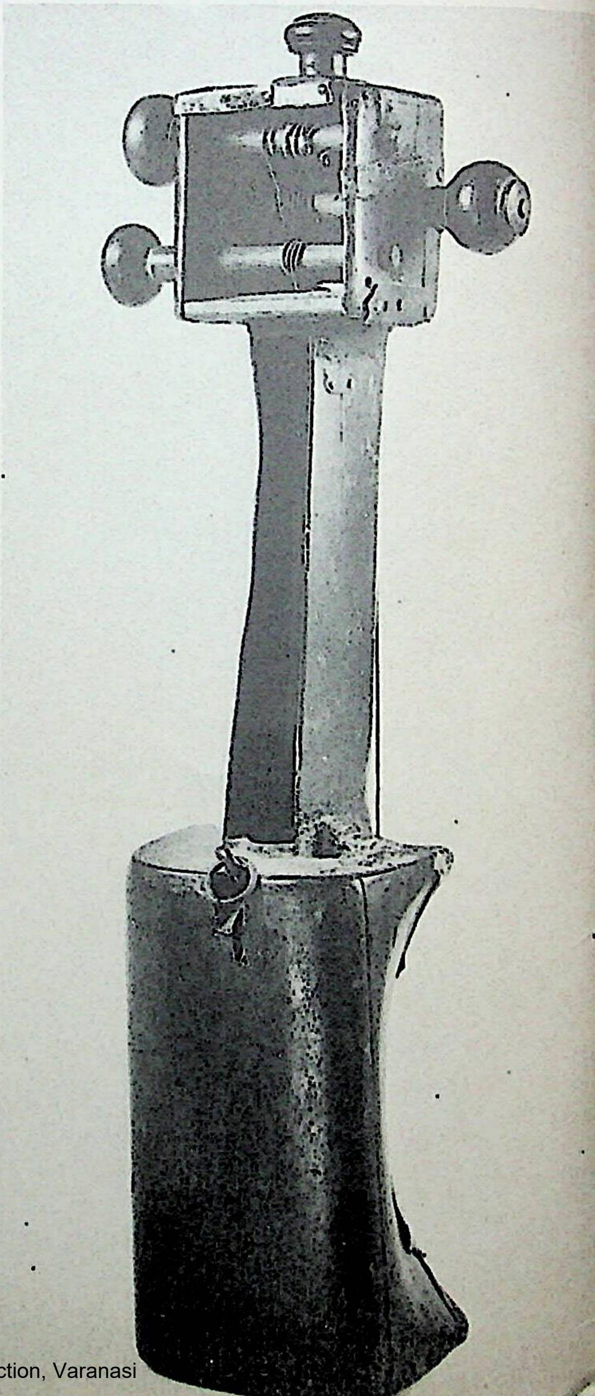

The first steel wire is the main melody string and is always played together with the second string, which serves as a drone. This pair (*jora*) is tuned to the tonic (*dadar*), whereas the third (*agora*) and lowest (*picha*) playing strings of gut are tuned respectively to the fifth and tonic of the lower octave. Eight or nine resonance strings (*jil*) of thin steel wire are attached to lateral pegs (*morni*) which are mounted in the neck (*nali*). They pass through a diagonal series of holes (*pinniyari*) in the fingerboard, and then through a row of holes pierced into the bridge, and are attached to the stringholder. The belly (*tabli*) is covered with parchment (*khal*) and a leather belt (*patta*), placed between parchment and bridge, serves as a reinforcement. A shoulder-strap is tied to a metal ring driven into the belly, and at the other end to the characteristic carving (*choti*) on top of the head. A lump of rosin is ingeniously stuck to the body of the instrument, as one usually finds with folk fiddles.

There is a great similarity in shape between the Gujaratan sarangi and the *Jogia sarangi* of Uttar Pradesh and Haryana. [17, 18, 26] This one has three main strings of gut, however, and is characterized by a slender neck and a narrow Waist. Except for a narrow groove through which the strings enter, the head is almost completely closed in the front. Some Jogia sarangis have a series of resonance strings, other have none.

In the small *saran(g)* of Kashmir the waist is even narrower. [19] It has a deep body, like the Kashmiri *rabab*, and both instruments form part of a folk musicians' ensemble which performs *chakari*. The *saran* has four playing strings, two of steel and two of gut, and eight to ten sympathetic strings.[27]

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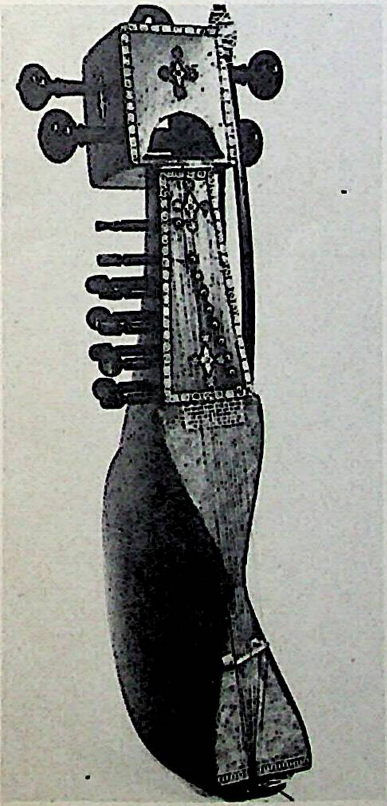

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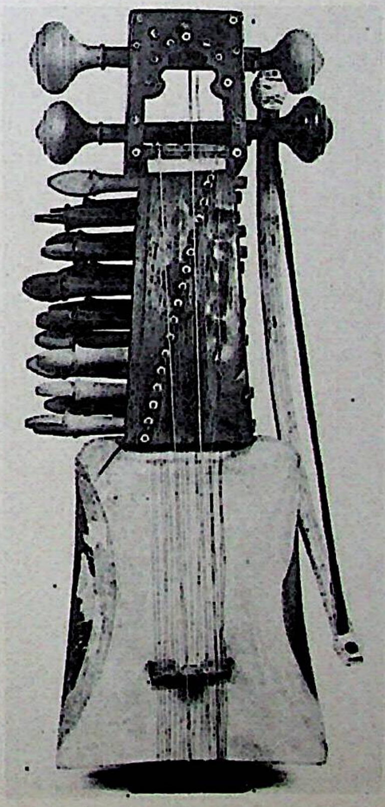

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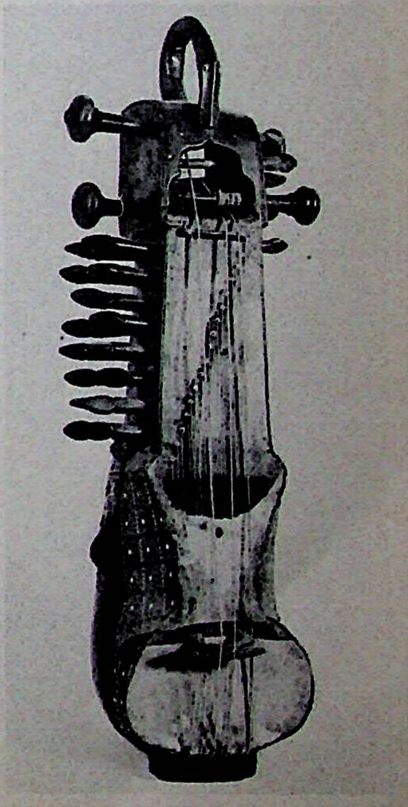

In the *Jogia* and *Dhani sarangis* of Rajasthan, the number of resonance strings has increased to 11 and 17 respectively, as a result of which the neck has become wider than in the formerly mentioned instruments.[28] [20, 75] There is such a striking resemblance between these sarangis and the small classical types of the last two centuries, that it is almost impossible to distinguish one from another.

The idea of increasing the number of sympathetic strings seems to have reached its limit in the large *saranga* of the Punjab, Jammu and Kashmir, and the almost identical *Sindhi sarangi* of Rajasthan and Sind.[29] [21] In the former instrument there are up to 18, and in the latter as many as 25 resonance strings. One set of steel wires (*jil*) corresponds to those of the Gujaratan sarangi. Another set of brass wires (*jhara*), attached to crudely-fitted pegs in the sides of the head, passes over the nut (slightly beneath the main strings) and through a second level of holes in the bridge. Instead of being rectangular, the body of the *saranga* and *Sindhi sarangi* is rounded. Mounted on the pegbox is a carving of a swan's head. Undoubtedly these particular fiddles are very advanced folk instruments; in previous centuries, smaller varieties with fewer resonance strings were used in classical music.[30] [70, 71] We will see, however, that classical sarangis have solved the problem of where to place extra resonance strings, in another way.

2 THE CLASSICAL SARANGI

2.1 *Sarangi makers*

Although the large sarangi used in contemporary classical music evolved only recently—around the 1850's—hardly anything is known about the craftsmen who specialized in making these instruments. "Jaunpuri sarangis are the most famous", writes Shahinda in 1914, whereas S. Bandyopadhyaya informs us that sarangis made in Budaun (Uttar Pradesh) are considered the best.[1] The musicians I spoke to, however, always refer to Meerut as the main centre of sarangi manufacture and

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Masita (c. 1840-1920) as the best maker. He is said to have learned the art from Mendu Khan, who lived during the time when the form of the large sarangi was determined.

Masita's sarangis are much sought after because of their superior sound and workmanship, and can be easily recognized by the connoisseur. It would be difficult to describe all their structural and ornamental features in detail. Their characteristic mark is a bird-shaped decoration of inlaid ivory above the large, arched opening (*mahrab*) in the head, whilst above the smaller niche the inlay consists of a rhombus or a 'small bird'. Masita's 'signature' has been widely imitated, however.

It was Masita's disciple, Abdul Aziz Behra (d.c. 1945), who, in the opinion of present-day sarangi players, made the most beautiful and solid instruments. When they can be found, they are usually in good condition. Unfortunately, his life-span was short and he did not make many instruments. Behra's mark resembles that of Masita, but on top of the 'bird' there is an inverted heart with three black dots.

Ram Narayan, Inder Lal Dhandra and the late Khadir Bakhsh, to mention only a few artists, chose to play on a Behra sarangi. [22] It also serves as a model for the sarangis of Prabhu Dayal, who occasionally makes them for Rikhi Ram, a reputed musical instrument shop in New Delhi. However, the quality of these instruments is much inferior to the original ones.

The son of Behra, Jassin, made instruments which are much lighter, but they have an excellent timbre. They are not very sturdy, however, and hence short-lived. The art of sarangi-making came to an end after Jassin, in spite of the fact that he taught the profession to his son. When I visited Meerut in 1971, I found out that this gentleman was working in a factory, since the demand for new sarangis is nil. Visiting other places in search of sarangi makers, I was equally disappointed. It is indeed doubtful whether one can still find an instrument maker skilled enough to make a good sarangi. It is even hard to find an expert who can repair an old sarangi; the best one I have found is Kartar Chand, who has a workshop in Pahar Ganj, Old Delhi.

It is certainly not easy to find a good, old sarangi. Most of the instruments sold in antique shops are in a deplorable condition and badly damaged. Over the years prices have shot up; in the early seventies, it was still possible to buy a common sarangi for Rs. 250 or less, but today (if one knows where to find one) the same instrument would cost from Rs. 750 to Rs. 1500.[2] New sarangis, manufactured mainly for export or the tourist trade, are usually of very poor quality and of no use to a sarangi student.

2.2 *Terminology*

A feature of early bowed instruments retained in the sarangi is their construction from a single block of wood, usually *tun* (*Toona ciliata* Roem., syn. *Cedrela toona* Roxb.), "which has been seasoned for one year and preferably treated with *geru* (red ochre) dissolved in water in order to restore the wood's natural colour and give it a natural sheen."[3]

Sarangis are commonly 64-67 cm long, with the belly (*pet* or *pasli*) hollowed out in the front.[4] [23, 24, xix] The neck (*chati* or *sina*, lit. chest) and head (*magaz* or *dimag*, lit. brain), which consists of two pegboxes, are hollowed out from the back. Thus, a sarangi contains four separate chambers. In the partition between

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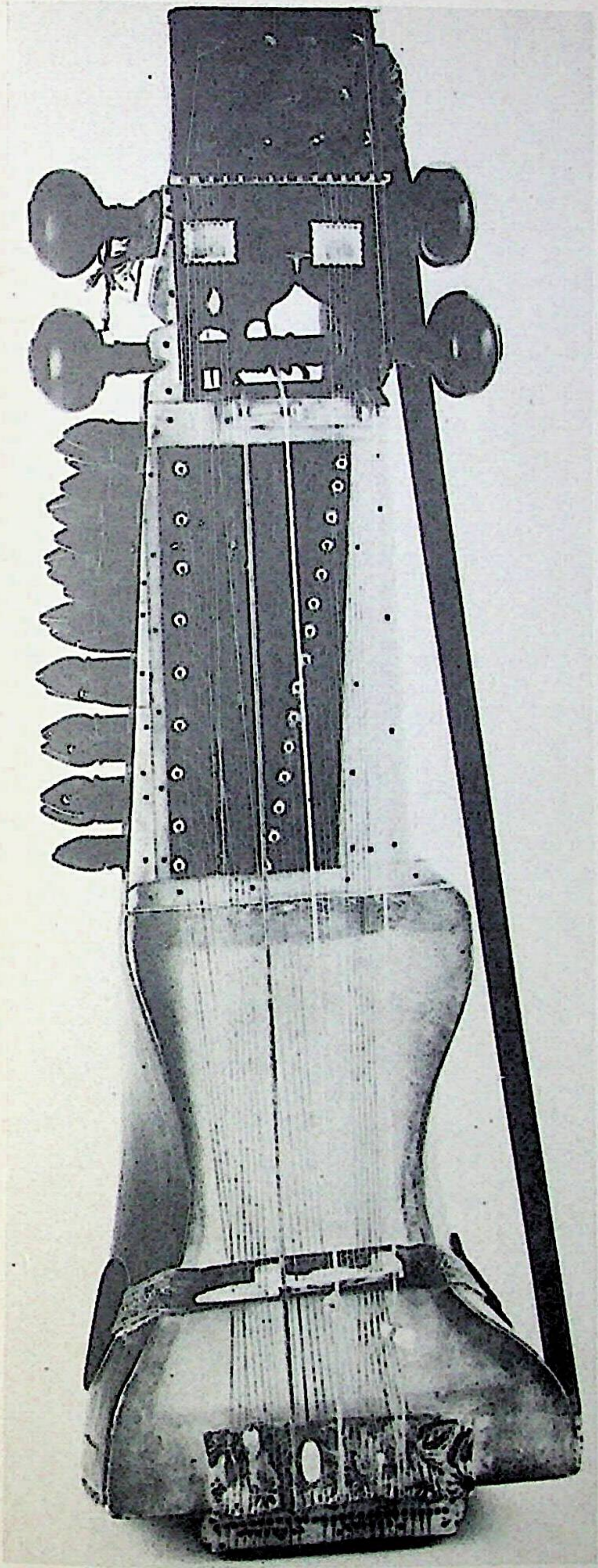

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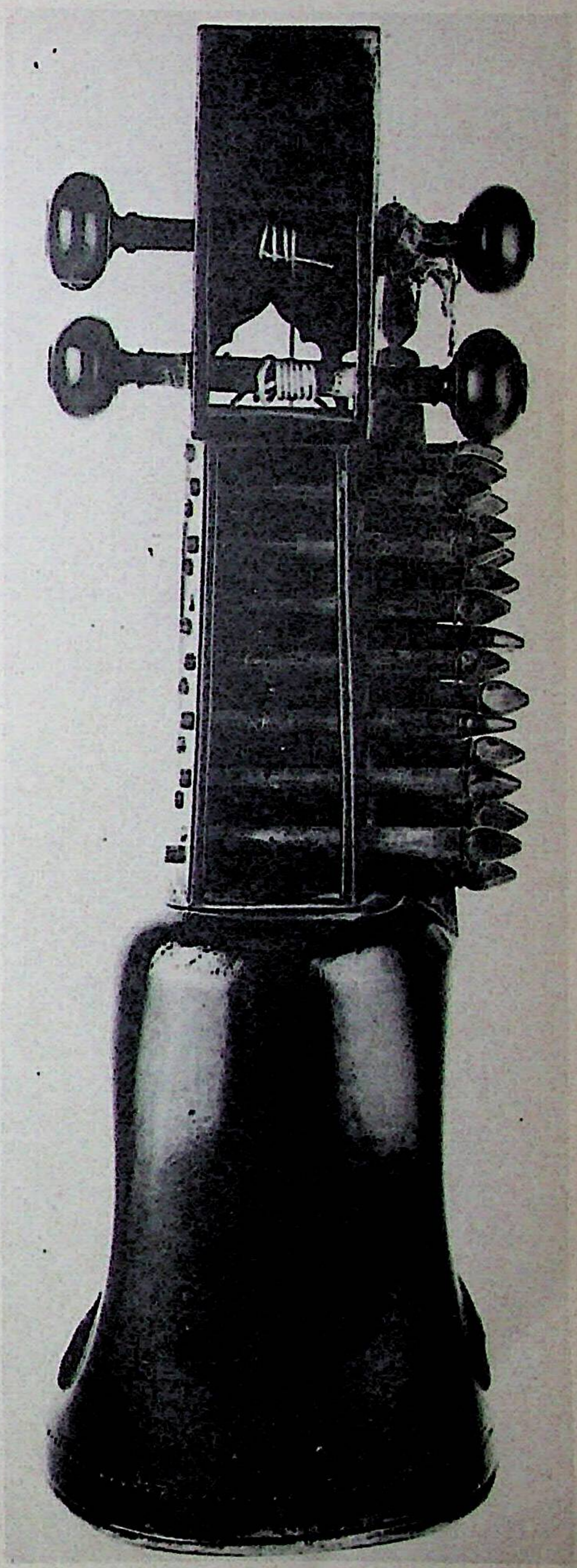

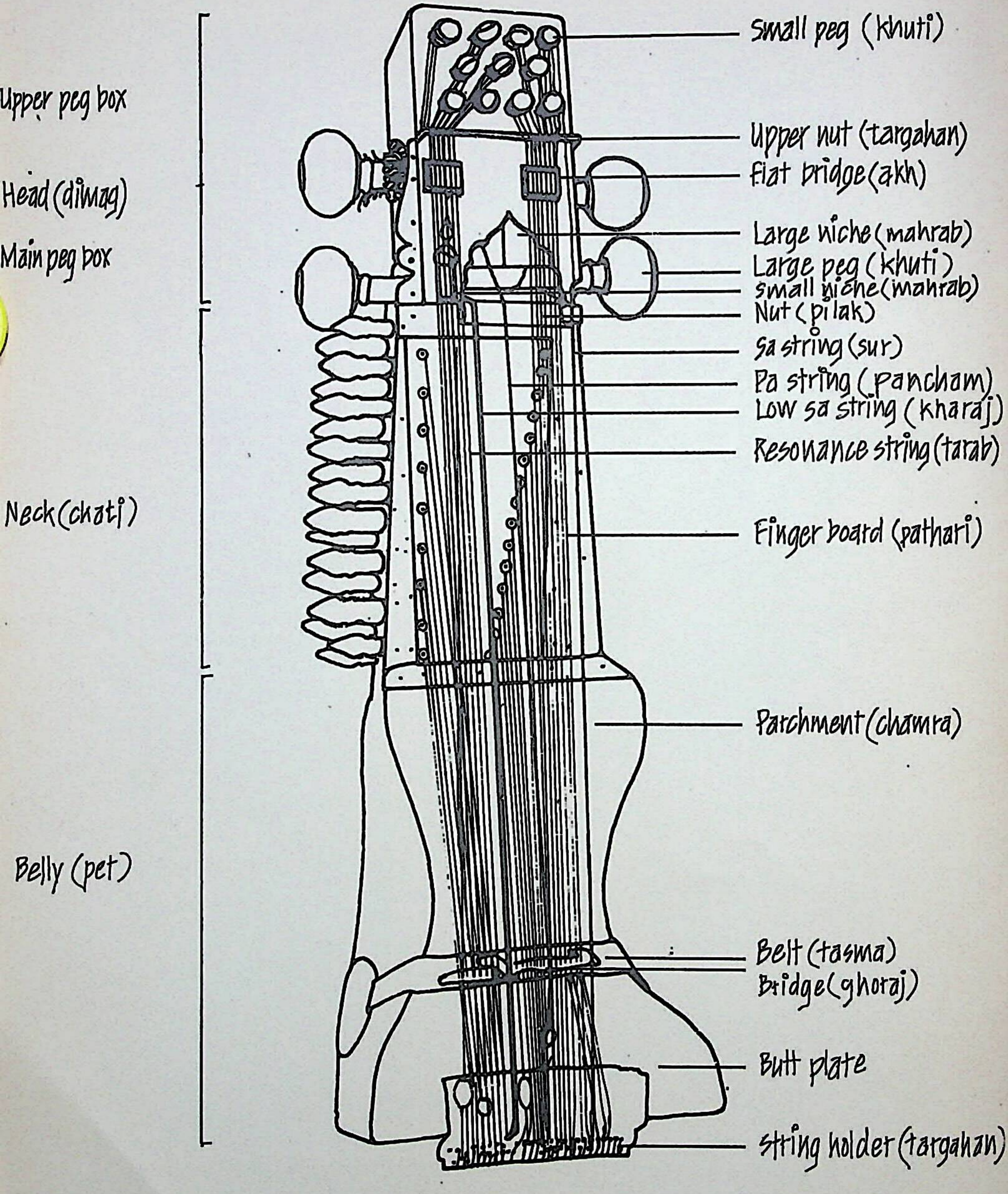
Upper peg box
Head (dimag)
Main peg box
Neck (chati)
Belly (pet)
Small peg (khuti)
Upper nut (targahan)
Flat bridge (akh)
Large niche (mahrab)
Large peg (khuti)
Small niche (mahrab)
Nut (pilak)
Sa string (sur)
Pa string (pancham)
Low sa string (kharaj)
Resonance string (tarab)
Finger board (pathari)
Parchment (chamra)
Belt (tasma)
Bridge (ghoraj)
Butt plate
String holder (targahan)

xix The parts of a classical sarangi

belly and neck there is a large hole at the back (c. 35-40 mm in diameter) which seems to be a distinguishing feature of the sarangi. When moving around with the instrument slung over their shoulder, folk musicians keep the bow in this hole.

The sarangi usually has 35 resonance and three heavy gut strings, which cause a tremendous tension on the body of the instrument; so the walls have to be fairly thick (c. 7-10 mm). The 'butt plate' which supports the stringholder (*targahan*) is between 30-40 mm thick. Even so, in spite of its inordinate thickness (and the internal wooden post, placed between the butt plate and the wall separating belly and neck), the majority of old sarangis are bent or cracked, especially behind the stringholder.

The belly has an irregular shape and is much less incurved on the right side than on the left, due to the extension of the neck. It is covered with the thin skin of a young goat (*khal* or *chamra*), tightly glued along the rim. Some sarangi players pierce or burn (with a cigarette!) a few soundholes in the skin table. The pressure from the bridge (*ghoraj*) forces the skin down considerably in spite of the fact that the bridge is supported by a leather belt (*tasma* or *patti*) nailed to the sides of the belly.

The neck of expensive instruments is decorated with pieces of inlaid ivory or bone (often fish-shaped), especially the part where the fingers touch the fingerboard (*pathari*). This provides a smooth surface and prevents wear at these points. Inserted in the neck on the right side are three rows of small pegs (*khuti*) usually made of *shisham* wood (*Dalbergia sissoo* Roxb.). The two back rows of 15 pegs tune the main set of sympathetic strings (*andheri ki tarab*), which pass through ivory or bone tube inserts (*dana, mukta* or *biri*, lit. bead) situated diagonally on the neck under the three main strings. The front row of 9 pegs tunes the right-hand set of sympathetic strings, which run almost vertically down the right side of the neck.

The resonance strings attached to the 11 frontal pegs mounted in the upper pegbox pass through holes in the upper nut (*targahan*), and are stretched over two table-like bridges (*akh, tarab ki pilak* or *jivari ki adi*), which are filed to a slightly curved arc. These so-called *jivari* bridges form a characteristic feature of Indian stringed instruments.

The main and right-hand resonance strings (*tarabs*) are traditionally made of either copper or brass, with a diameter of 0.40-0.45 mm, although the new vogue is to use steel strings of 0.30-0.35 mm. The upper *tarabs* are mainly steel, but copper is used for the strings tuned to a lower pitch.

The playing strings are made of gut. Considering their length and high pitch, they are quite thick. The first string (*sur, tip* or *jil*) has the thickness of a harp G (fourth octave), the middle string (*pancham* or *dor*) of a harp B (fifth octave), whereas the lowest string (*kharaj* or *sharaj*) corresponds to a double bass D string.[5]

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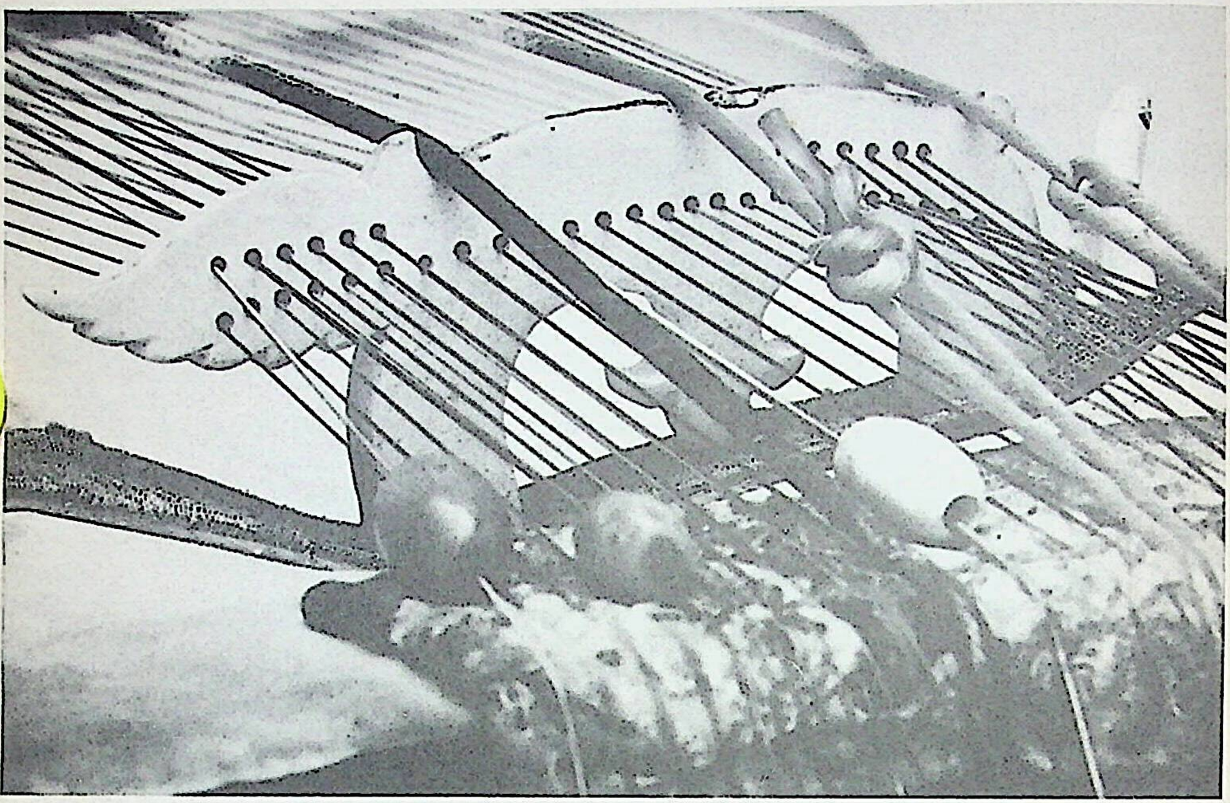

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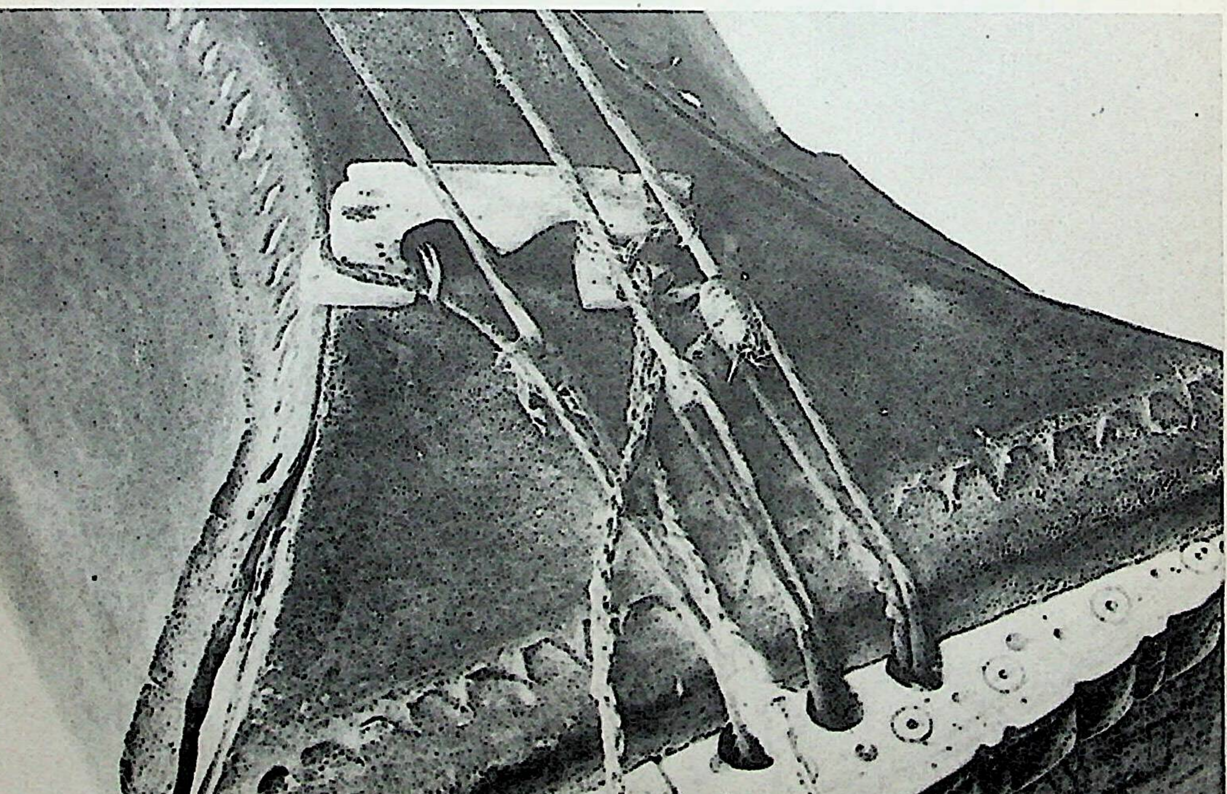

Folk sarangis usually have three playing strings of silk, horsehair or gut. Another metal string is sometimes added as a drone, placed in close proximity to the main playing string and tuned to the same note. In classical sarangis, the fourth large peg (*khuti*) has lost its original function, since the string attached to it has become a ground-note for the system of sympathetic strings. This string of twisted brass wire (*laraj*) is the only resonance string secured in the main pegbox.[6]

The sarangi has five bridges altogether: two nuts (one for the upper *tarabs* and another for the playing strings, called *pilak* or *ad*), two flat *jivari* bridges and a main bridge (*ghoraj*) made of ivory, stag-horn or ebony. The *ghoraj* is arched, carved in the shape of an elephant and supports all the strings.[25] The playing strings pass over notches, whereas the resonance strings pass through small holes drilled into the bridge at two levels. The lower row of 25 holes accommodates the main and right-hand *tarabs* as well as the *laraj*. The upper row is in two groups, consisting of five holes on the left and six on the right, for the *jivari tarabs*.

2.3 *Tuning*

The sarangi has a relatively wide pitch range and can be tuned from C sharp to F sharp. The best sound is obtained by tuning the first string to D sharp or E, but, as vocalists sing at their own pitch, sarangi players must always adjust to that pitch for accompaniment. When this is impossible, as is often the case with women singers, they transpose to the middle string. Hence, there are two basic tuning systems:

(1) *Chargha*, keynote-fifth-octave (*S P̣ Ṣ*), the most common tuning which by transposition becomes fourth-keynote-fourth (*M S Ṃ*) and is called *madhyam that*.

(2) Keynote-fourth-octave (*S Ṃ Ṣ*), which by transposition becomes fifth-keynote-fifth (*P S P̣*), and is called *thath*. Sometimes, the *kharaj* is lowered a whole tone so that the tuning becomes fifth-keynote-fourth (*P S Ṃ*). This is to extend the lower register.[7]

The tuning of the sympathetic strings also follows two basic systems, one for accompaniment and the other for solo. In both, the main *tarabs* are tuned chromatically, starting from the lowest string at a minor sixth (*Dha komal*) or minor seventh (*Ni komal*), depending on the gauge of the strings. Since this is a fixed scale, sarangi players talk about *achal that*.

In solo-playing, the right-hand *tarabs* are usually tuned according to the scale of the *raga*, starting from the keynote. Thus, in Kafi *that*, the nine sympathetic strings are tuned as follows:

$S\ R\ \underline{G}\ M\ P\ D\ \underline{N}\ \dot{S}\ \dot{R}$

For accompaniment, however, the right-hand *tarabs* are often tuned chromatically, enabling the sarangi player to change the pitch of the main strings with a minimum adjustment necessary for the *tarabs*, and in order to play in any *raga* which the singer may choose. The late Abdul Majid Khan, for instance, used brass wires for all the resonance strings on his sarangi and tuned them as follows:

Ṉ̣ Ṇ S Ṟ R G̱ G M P

The upper *tarabs* are tuned in a melodically interesting manner and vary according to the *raga* and the taste of the player. The following tunings (left to right) in Kafi *that* may serve as examples.

Ram Narayan:	Ṉ̣ S R G̱ Ḍ	Ṉ̣ S R G̱ M Ṣ Ṉ̣ S R G̱ S P̣
Inder Lal Dhandra:	G̱ R S Ṉ̣ P̣	R S Ṉ̣ Ḍ P̣ Ṣ
Abdul Majid Khan:	G̣ Ṃ Ṃ̄ P̣	Ṛ G̱̣ G̣ Ṃ P̣ Ṉ̣

In tuning, the artist observes the following procedure. After adjusting the main strings, he places the sarangi horizontally in his lap in front of him and begins to tune the upper *tarabs* in sequence, left to right.[27] The pegs are turned with the help of a tuning-key (*mochana* or *chutki*), made of hardwood or stag-horn, and the strings are sounded with the nail of the right-hand index finger. Next he tunes the right-hand *tarabs*, then the main *tarabs*.[28] After checking the playing strings, the whole tuning procedure is repeated several times until the sarangi sounds at its best. Under favourable conditions, a sarangi player can tune his instrument in five to ten minutes.

2.4 *Left-hand technique*

The high-positioned main strings of the sarangi are stopped by pressing the fingernails sideways against them. Most sarangi players use the part of the nail just under the cuticle (and some in fact use the skin above the cuticle) with the fingertips touching the fingerboard (*pathari*). Talcum powder is applied as a lubricant. The left-hand technique involves both sliding from one note to another and articulating separate notes, giving the sarangi a range of musical possibilities which is virtually unmatched.

"The actual fingering is completely unstandardised; one might almost say there are as many fingering patterns as there are players", write Neil Sorrell and Ram Narayan.[8] My own research does not corroborate this view, and shows that various schools of sarangi players in northern India have evolved different but consistent fingering systems, according to the demands of their musical styles. In general, it seems that previous generations of sarangi players practised a more complex fingering, using four fingers instead of three. Complex fingering seems better suited for expressing the distinct and vivid movements characteristic of the lighter genres, but it is cumbersome. For solo-playing in particular, the more streamlined systems have proved to be superior, because of their logic and efficiency, and the resultant speed which they allow.

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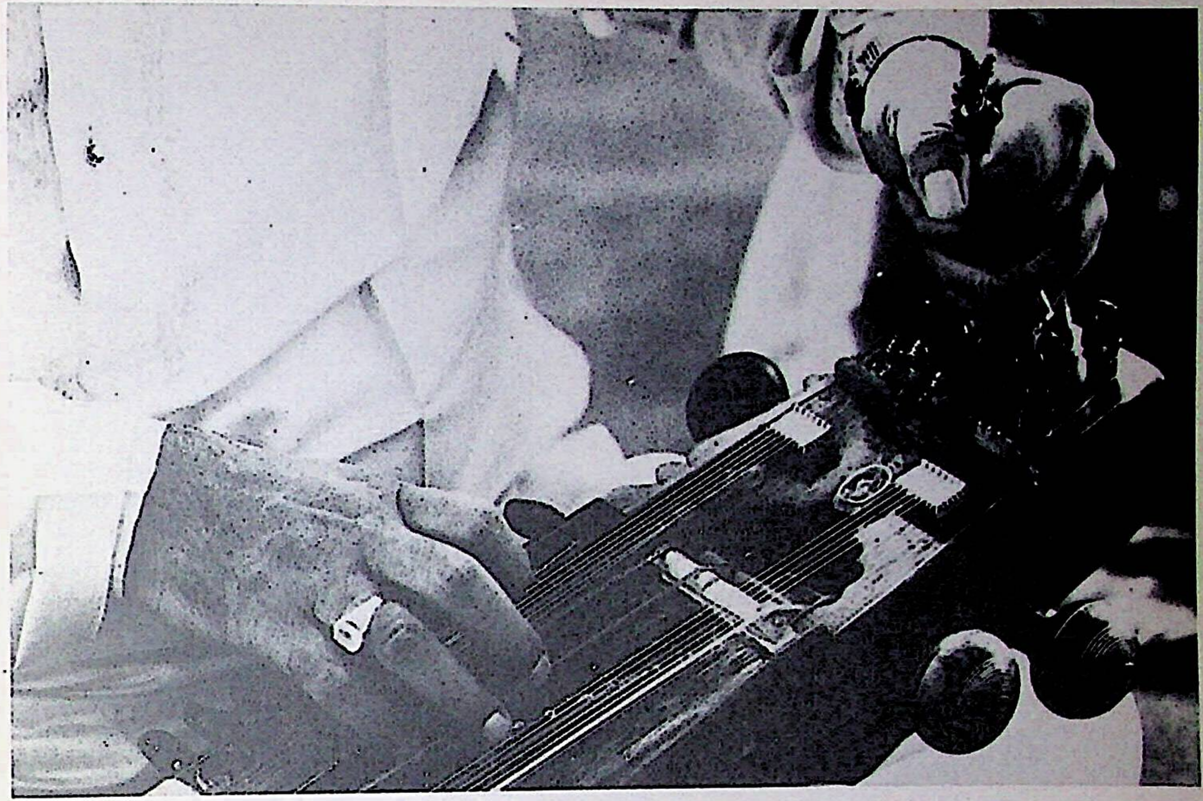

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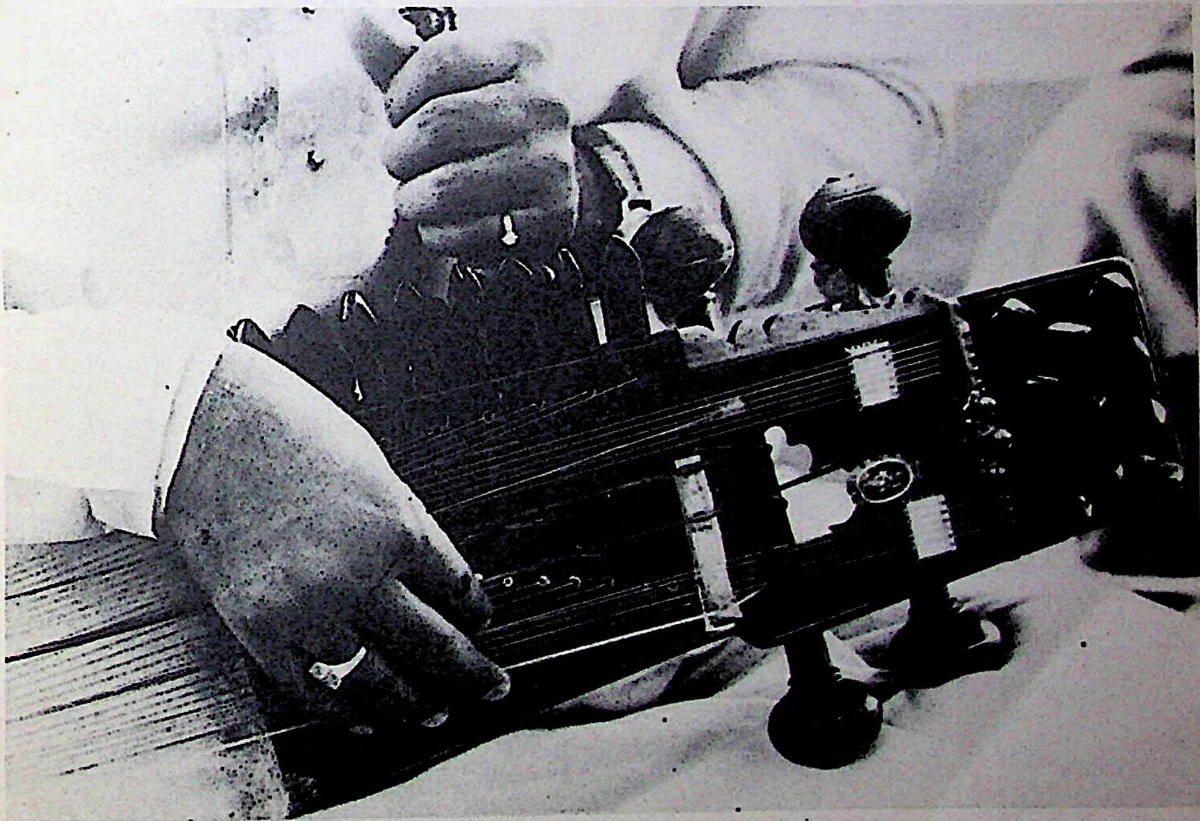

Four fingering systems are given below. The first one was demonstrated by several old artists, including the late Abdul Majid Khan and Mohammad Hussain Khan.

Table : Fingering Systems

		S R G M P D N Ṡ Ṙ . . . Ṡ N D P M G R S
(1)	Old school, DELHI and surrounding cities	0 1 1 2 2 3 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ 4 . . . $\frac{3}{4}$ 3 3 2 2 1 1 0
(2)	New school, DELHI and surrounding cities	0 1 1 2 2 3 3 3 3 . . . 3 3 3 2 2 1 1 0
	Bundu Khan (*sapat*)	0 1 1 2 2 1 2 3 4 . . .
(3)	BANARAS	0 1 2 $\frac{3}{1}$ 2 3 3 3 3 . . . 3 3 3 2 $\frac{1}{3}$ 2 1 0
		(0 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 3 . . . 3 3 3 2 2 2 1 0)
(4)	UDAIPUR : Ram Narayan	0 1 2 2 2 3 3 3 3 . . . 3 3 3 2 2 2 1 0
	Inder Lal Dhandra	0 1 $\frac{2}{1}$ $\frac{2}{1}$ 2 3 3 3 3 . . .

Apparently, the great majority of sarangi players who belonged to the 'old school' [see Table (1)] employed the little finger in the *tip* region (higher register) when playing fast scales or *sapat tanas*, i.e. consecutive ascending or descending note patterns. As shown below in interrupted note sequences and *paltas* (exercises), the *Re Ga Ma Pa* movement was sometimes played with the first, second, third and fourth fingers respectively.

S R G M S — M — R G R S M G R S,
0 1 2 3 0 3 1 2 1 0 3 2 1 0

R G M P R — P — G M G R P M G R, etc.
1 2 3 4 1 4 2 3 2 1 4 3 2 1

This *palta* was taught to me by a sarangi player from Meerut who was already in his nineties, ten years ago. It appears to be a fingering especially evolved to accompany women singers, where it is seldom necessary to play much above the fifth on the first string, which in *madhyam that* corresponds to the tonic of the singer's higher register.

After experimenting with the then current fingerings, Bundu Khan came to the conclusion that the little finger was too weak to be of much use in the *tip* region. He did not completely discard it, but employed it sparingly, for instance in fast runs or certain embellishments (*murkis*). As a result of Bundu Khan's research and fame, artists of the 'new school' [see Table (2)] dropped the fourth finger and continued with the third finger from *Dha* (in the middle register). This fingering, used by most present-day sarangi players, is a simplification of the older system. The following *palta* may serve as an example of its application.[9]

S R G R S R G M G R,
0 1 1 1 0 1 1 2 1 1

G M P M G M P D P M,
1 2 2 2 1 2 2 3 2 2

P D N Ḋ P D N Ṡ N D, etc.
2 3 3 3 2 3 3 3 3 3

In contrast to many other sarangi players, Bundu Khan "was not so dogmatic about any special fingering ... He used the little finger to achieve special effects and found it particularly useful when playing *thumris* in the style of the Patiala *gharana*, because it made the *murkis* much easier to reproduce", writes Rajesh Bahadur in a personal communication.[10] Having mastered all the fingering systems of his time, Bundu Khan could comfortably play any note with any finger. In playing *gamak* for instance, he would often stop the same note with three fingers instead of one (as most sarangi players do). Rather than shaking the whole hand up and down, as a result of which the *gamak* may sound unclear and out of tune, Bundu Khan developed a technique in which the three fingers follow each other in rapid succession, thus repeating the same note three, four or even five times, as shown below:

G G G
3 2 1
1 2 3

G G G G
3 2 1 2
1 2 3 2

G G G G G
3 2 1 2 3
1 2 3 2 1

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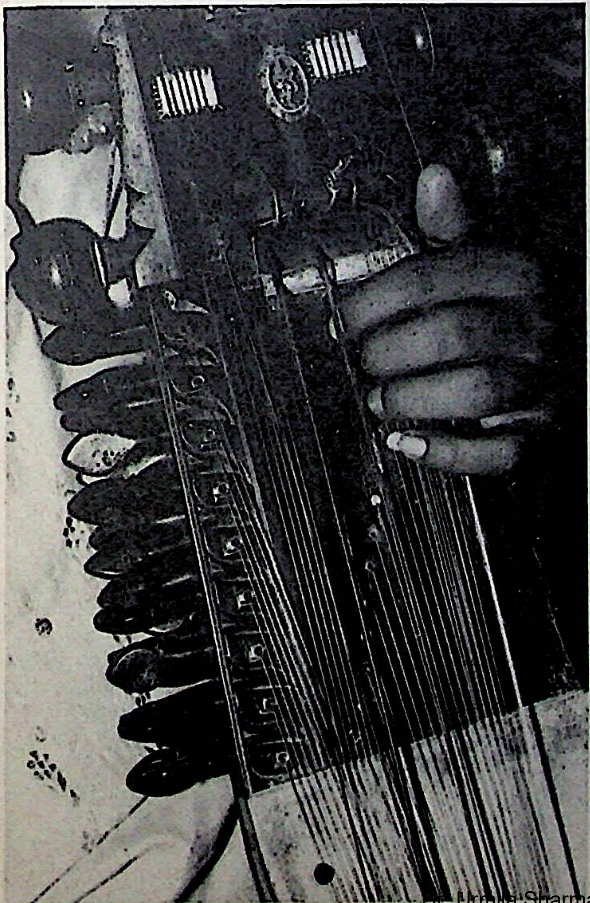

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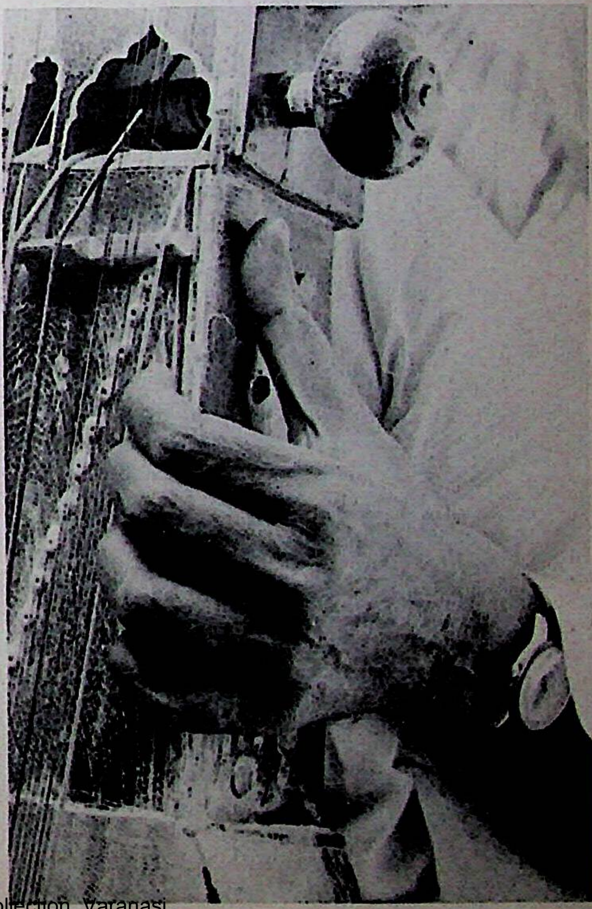

"Whilst on the subject", continues R.. Bahadur, "Bundu Khan was particularly fond of telling his students that the thumb was extremely important! He said that while playing, the thumb should never become rigid and must be moved up and down to help the fingers become more evenly balanced, pliable and dexterous. He used to say that the kind of lightness of touch one must aim for in sarangi is that which comes easily to good exponents of the harmonium."

Sarangi players from Banaras profess the contrary. According to them, the thumb should be held rigidly on the neck. In the first position it is placed where the neck meets the head, and *Re, Ga* and *Ma* are stopped with the first, second and third fingers respectively [see Table (3)].[30] In the second position, the thumb is placed further down, and the notes *Ma, Pa* and *Dha* to *Ṡa* are stopped with the first, second and third fingers respectively. In the third position, playing in the higher register (*tip*), the thumb rests on the bulge of the belly. Thus, depending on the position, the fourth (*Ma*) is stopped with either the first or third finger, as demonstrated in the following *palta*:[11]

S R G M,   R G M P,   G M P D,   M P D N,
0 1 2 3   1 2 3 2   2 1 2 3   1 2 3 3

P D N S, etc.
2 3 3 3

When the scale of the *raga* contains an augmented fourth (*Ma tivra*), however, it is stopped with the second finger, in which case the fingering becomes identical with the system propounded by Ram Narayan [see Table (4)].[29] This is probably the most simplified system, and Ram Narayan strictly adheres to it, as shown in this *palta*:

S R G G R S S R G R R S,   R G M M G R R G M G G R,
0 1 2 2 1 0 0 1 2 1 1 0   1 2 2 2 2 1 1 2 2 2 2 1

G M P P M G G M P M M G,   M P D D P M M P D P P M,
2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 2   2 2 3 3 2 2 2 2 3 2 2 2

P D N N D P P D N D D P, etc.
2 3 3 3 3 2 2 3 3 3 3 2

The inherent logic of the system is explained by Neil Sorrell and the maestro himself:

> The second finger is used more than the first because it is the strongest of all the fingers. The third is used perhaps most of all, especially in the higher register where consecutive notes are played with this one finger. This can easily cause intonation problems but it has many justifications. If consecutive notes were played in the top register with consecutive fingers, the fingers would be too far apart even if bunched tightly together, and correct intonation would be impossible. The third finger has a narrower nail than the other fingers . . . and this assists in finding the note accurately. Moreover, the hand is turned slightly in the highest register so that a smaller part of the nail touches the string . . . [The fourth] finger may be used to touch the first string to give a very high *Sa*, three octaves above the open string, but is too weak for any other use, although some other sarangi players do use it more. The final point in favour of playing consecutive notes with one finger is the most important, since it lies at the heart of

> Indian music. Graces, slides and slurs, used correctly, are essential. Western music is more concerned with a clean jump from one note to the next (thus consecutive notes are usually played with separate fingers on stringed instruments) while Indian music emphasises not only the stopping points of notes but also what lies between them. Even in fast playing, Ram Narayan insists, 'there must be some grace'. There is also an important qualitative difference between playing a phrase like *Dha Pa Ma Pa* fast, using Ram Narayan's fingering—3222—and what may seem a simpler and more obvious fingering: 3212. The latter is considered to be light and frivolous, lacking the heavier and nobler quality of the former, and the difference is noticeable, however fast the tempo.[12]

It should be noted that Inder Lal Dhandra who, like Ram Narayan, comes from Udaipur, basically follows the same fingering. Inder Lal is less strict, however, and teaches his students to stop *Ga* and *Ma* with either the first or second finger, as shown below:

S R G S G R G S R G R S,	R G M R M G M R G M G R,
0 1 2 0 2 1 2 0 1 2 1 0	1 2 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 2 1 1
G M P G P M P G M P M G,	M P D M D P D M P D P M, etc.
1 2 2 1 2 1 2 1 2 2 1 1	1 2 3 1 3 2 3 1 2 3 2 1

Obviously, there are many other fingering systems, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. In general, expert sarangi players consider the system itself less important than consistency and tunefulness, which are achieved by correct practice.

2.5 *Bowing*

The shaft of a sarangi bow (*gaz* or *kamani*) is made from a straight length of hard wood—approximately 70 cm in length and round in section—which bends when it is strung with horsehair. The hank of hair (*bal*), from the tail of a stallion, passes through a hole at the distal end of the stick, and is tied into a knot (*gundhi* or *choti*). The proximal end of the hair, which is plaited, passes over a wooden nut (*ad* or *gatta*) and through another hole in the stick. "The nut is tied in position by an elaborate criss-crossing of strong thread [woven into the plait] and cannot be adjusted without loosening this thread. Generally, bows maintain their tension very well and never need adjustment."[13] Rosin (*biroja*) is applied to the hair from time to time.

Traditionally, sarangi players use heavy bows made from ebony (*abnus*), strung with black horsehair, which has a very long life. Present-day artists tend to use lighter bows made from *shisham*, but advise their students to practise with a heavy bow, which takes more effort to control. The bow is held in an underhand grip and the pressure is regulated by the first two fingers (or the forefinger alone), which are positioned on the shaft, while the other two (or three) fingers embrace the nut. It can be held in two ways, either with a closed fist or an open grip.[31, 32] The latter seems to allow for longer and more sustained bowing. "Unlike many players Ram Narayan keeps his right hand low so that the bow is more or less at right angles to the string . . ."[14] However, when the hand is lifted slightly, it eases the rhythmical use of the bow in *jor, jhala, layakari* and other rhythmically active movements which are played with the tip of the bow

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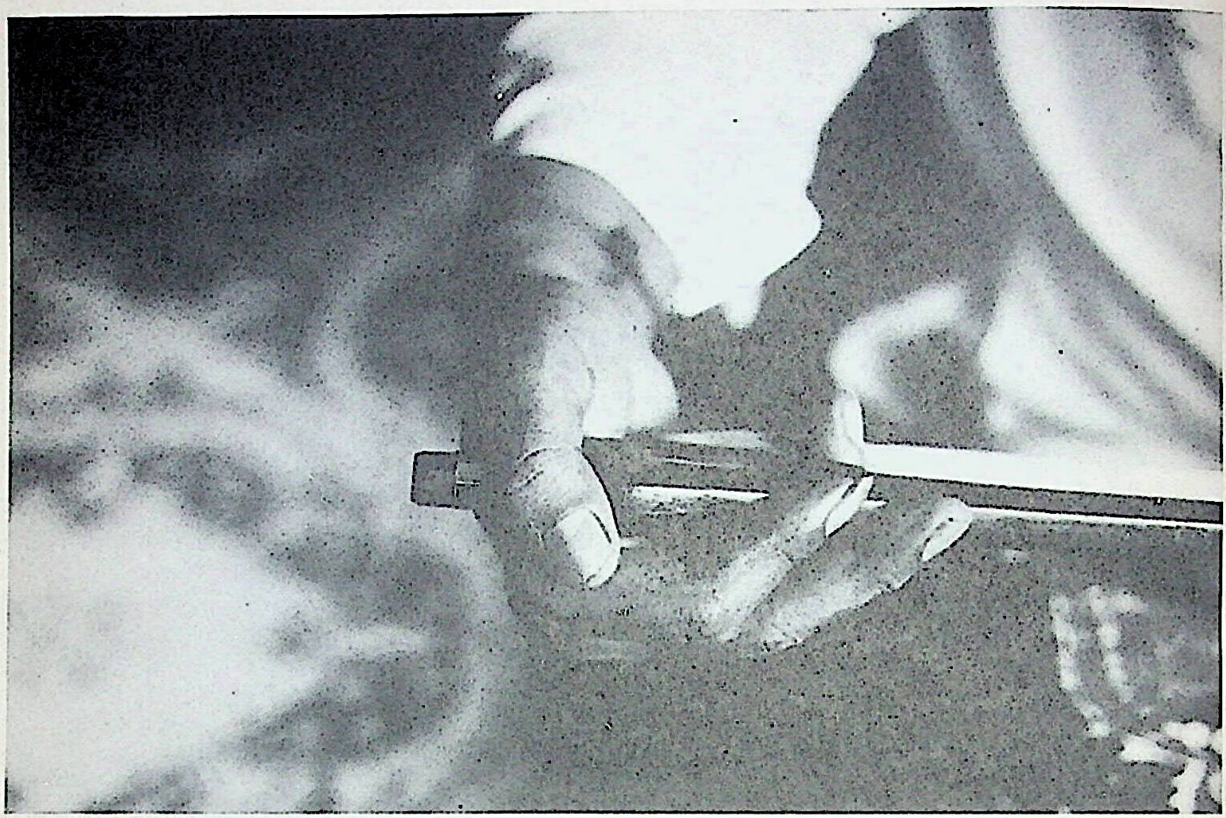

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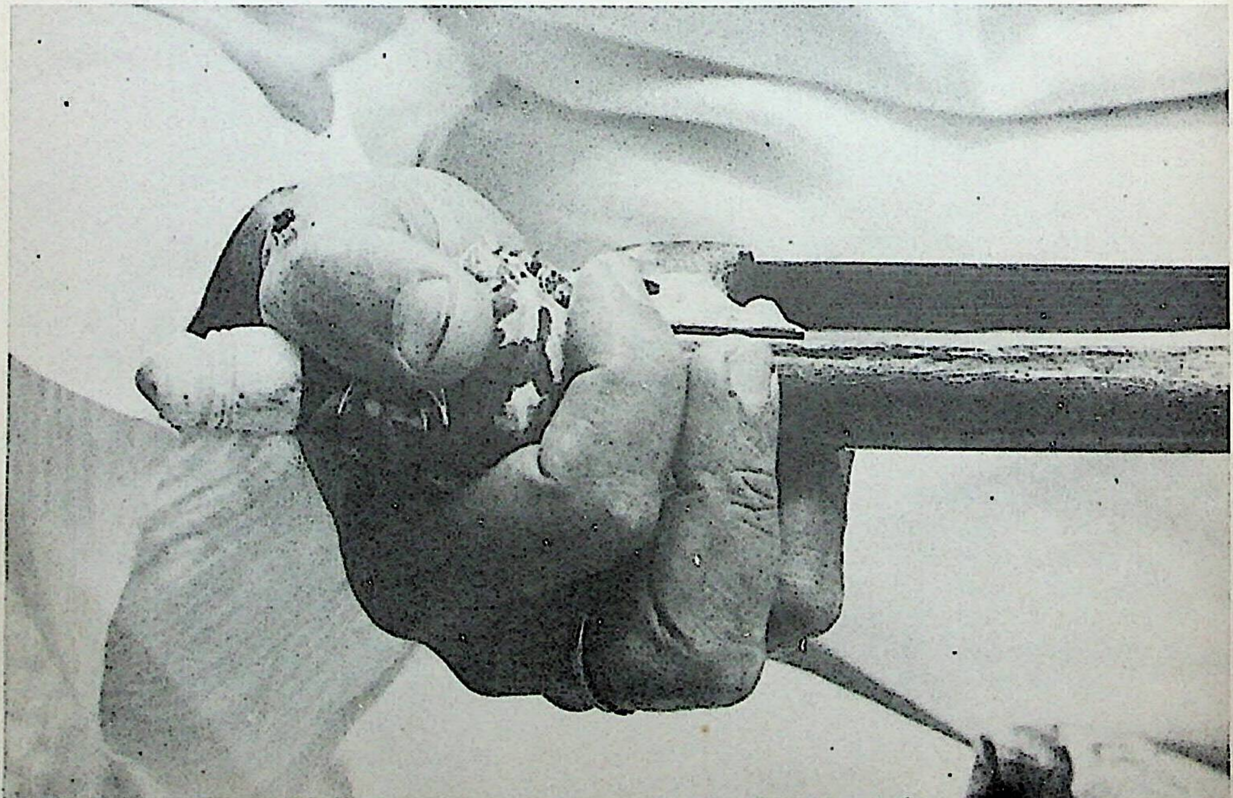

In order to bring out the richness of sound and to get a full response from the sympathetic strings, the bow must engage the strings close to the bridge. Bow control is fundamental to the art of sarangi-playing. When describing bowing, however, sarangi players are much less explicit than when they elaborate on left-hand technique, for which there are many different types of exercises. Proficiency in bowing, in their opinion, comes largely with practice.

In our view, however, most sarangi players have not given serious thought to bowing. Often, they use only part of the bow, interrupting each stroke with a pause. Besides, there is little play with dynamics. Naturally, great sarangi players have paid due attention to right-hand technique, developing long, steady bows and flawless, inaudible bow changes. Ram Narayan, in particular, emphasizes the importance of very slow practice, using the full length of the bow. He observes a clear distinction between up and down bows, and stresses that a new phrase or movement should always begin with an up bow.

3 MUSICAL BOWS AND THE ORIGIN OF BOWING

"The first clear literary and artistic references to the bow as a means of drawing sound from stringed instruments occur at the beginning of the tenth century," concludes Werner Bachmann in his major study on *The Origins of Bowing.* "At that time the area within which bowing was practised corresponded roughly to the territories of the Islamic and Byzantine Empires. Outside these territories there is no evidence that any stringed instruments were played with the bow before A.D. 1000, either in Europe or in Eastern Asia: the theories that the bow originated in Northern Europe or India have not been confirmed by recent research." Bachmann does admit, however, that "the Indian theory . . . has not yet been factually disproved and is still the subject of discussion."[1]

Today, twenty-two years after this author compiled the existing data on the development of bowed instruments up to the thirteenth century, no fundamental research in this area has emerged. The idea that the playing bow originated in India is so deeply rooted in an ancient myth, that few Indian authors seem to seriously question it. Most recently for instance, Suresh Vrat Rai remarked: "Leaving aside the shape and structure [of instruments], sculptures, wall carvings [and] paintings . . . of the 6th to 13th century provide adequate evidence testifying [to the] existence of bowed instruments."[2] B. C. Deva also believed that "instruments of this class can be found in sculptures and reliefs from about the 10th century A.D.", but both writers failed to provide pictorial evidence to support their claims.[3]

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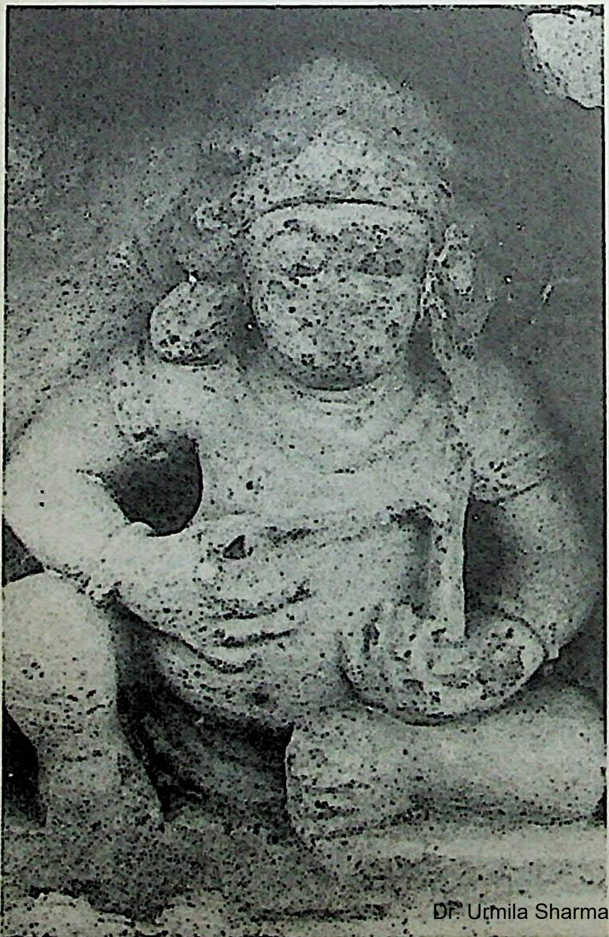

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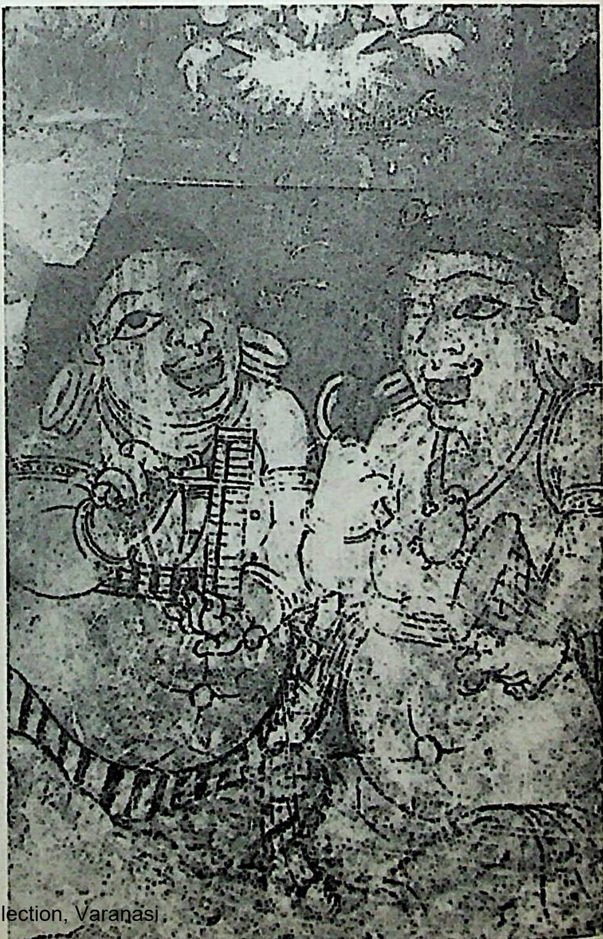


A. K. Coomaraswamy, on the other hand, observed that "no Indian *vina,* whether ancient or modern, was ever played with a bow", whilst C. Marcel-Dubois reached similar conclusions.[4] G. H. Tarlekar also made a thorough investigation of the iconography of ancient musical instruments. In the temple sculptures of Badami and Pattadakal, however, Tarlekar recognized "the precursor of the violin-type", and in a personal communication he wrote: "There is a sculpture in the Virupaksha temple (Pattadakal, 7th-8th century A.D.) in which the playing-stick is used as a bowing-stick like that of a violin. Such a playing-stick appears also in an Ajanta sculpture in Cave No. 4 (4th-6th century A.D.). But I have not come across any *shastric* reference to bowed instruments earlier than the 11th century A.D."[5]

When I first saw these reliefs with gay-looking dwarfs (*ganas*) who sing, dance and play rod-like instruments, I was also tempted to believe that these instruments were predecessors of the fiddle. One sculpture, in particular, caught my attention: a *gana,* holding a rather long stick in his right hand, with which he seems to be rubbing a string.[33] Or does he use it as a scraping device? The position of the left hand suggests that his forefinger stops the string.[6] Later, however, when I saw reliefs and paintings of similar instruments where the surface is clearly notched (and also the position of the left hand varies), it became evident that they were either idiochord tube zithers (made from a bamboo internodium) or scrapers.[7][34, 35] This is also the case with another variety of rod-like instruments depicted in the temple sculptures of Belur and Halebid (12th-13th century). According to Sharangadeva, these serrated percussion instruments, called *shukti,* were made from iron or bronze and were used for indicating the divisions of the rhythm cycle.[8]

Thus, as far as medieval sculptures and paintings are concerned, we agree with Bachmann that there is no conclusive evidence supporting the view that the bow had an early origin in India. Does this settle the topic or should we continue our search in other directions? What does literature say about the bowed *ravanahasta* which, according to the oral tradition, was invented by Ravana thousands of years ago? What did it look like? Is there a relationship between the origin of the playing bow and the musical bow? In his earlier writings, Curt Sachs seems to have been in favour of such a hypothesis.[9]

3.1 *Pinaka, the bow of Shiva*

Although the origin of the musical bow "has long provoked conjecture and contention", the bow itself is generally regarded as one of the most ancient stringed instruments.[10] Even the gods of music, Apollo and Shiva, under the magical spell of the twang of the bowstring, would use their powerful weapons as musical

instruments. Thus, according to the myth, the archer's bow was transformed into a musical bow and accorded a supernatural status.

In epic literature we come across Shiva as Pinakin, the bearer of the invincible bow *pinaka*, but nowhere has he been portrayed playing his bow as a musical instrument. However, the ancient *pinga*, mentioned in the *Rigveda*, may have been a musical bow, while Pinga was another name used to address the multifaceted god Shiva.[11] Thus, long before Shiva played the seven-stringed harp, the musical bow must have been his favourite instrument.[12] It was also the instrument played by the mythological demon king of Lanka, Ravana, who was a great devotee of Shiva and an expert in the field of music, like his master. The *Ramayana* recounts how this powerful ruler abducted Sita and challenged Rama to a fight:

> He has not yet known my prowess in combat. Nor does he know of my formidable *vina* in the form of a bow, which is played with the heads of arrows, which strikes a mild note in the form of a twang of the bowstring, a moderate note in the form of cries of anguish and a high-pitched note in the form of the sound produced by the base of steel arrows, and which I shall play on in the course of a conflict . . . [13]

It was not until the 12th century that musical bows were described in detail, and it is certainly no coincidence that these instruments, the *pinaki* and *ravanahasta vinas*, were associated with the legendary bows of Pinakin and Ravana. Nanyadeva (1094-1133) is probably the first writer to deal with them in his important treatise on music, *Bharatabhashya*.[14] He was king of the northern state of Mithila and belonged to the so-called Karnata dynasty which originated in the south. It seems that he was just as interested in the northern *pinaka* as in the southern *ravanahasta*.

In his introduction to the chapter on stringed instruments, Nanyadeva relates the well-known story about Ravana, who practised asceticism for many years in order to gain the favour of the mighty Shiva. Not only did Ravana cut off nine of his own ten heads, but he also created a musical instrument, inspired by the rustling sound of a bamboo twig against a gourd (*alabu*). Thus, by stretching a nerve taken from his body along a stick cut from the forest, and tying a gourd to it, he made the *ravanahasta*, which he used to accompany the Vedic songs in praise of Shiva. It is said that Shiva was very pleased with him; deities such as Sarasvati, Kurma and Brahma, had also created *vinas* in Shiva's honour, and the *kinnaras*, who had learned the art of music from Narada, had invented the *kinnari vina*. About his own invention, Shiva says:

> From the bow itself I have constructed a *vina* which is known everywhere as *saravi* or *pinaki*, while you, my son, have worshipped me with a similar instrument made from your own body, which will be known as the *ravanahasta* . . . [15]

Although a description of the *ravanahasta* is not included in the only existing manuscript of *Bharatabhashya*, Nanyadeva alludes in the above passage to the fact that this instrument was closely related to the *pinaka*. The latter *vina* consisted of "two bow shapes" and the string was stopped by a piece of coconut shell worn on the forefinger of the left hand. The playing bow (*kona*) was strung with horsehair and rubbed with resin.

Musicologists after Nanyadeva also paid a great deal of attention to the musical bow. Haripala, a Gujarati king writing in the second half of the 12th century, was of the opinion: "The *pinaki vina* is undoubtedly considered the most important instrument." According to him, the bow was made of bamboo and a sinew was used for the string. The playing bow (*karmuka*) was strung with goathair which was treated with resin powder.[16]

A long description of the *pinaki vina* is also found in the *Sangitaratnakara* by the great musical savant from the Deccan, Sharangadeva. He refers to the playing bow as *vadana capa* and writes about the playing technique:

> The *pinaki* is played in a sitting position, and the gourd is held face down between the two feet. The upper end of the instrument rests against the shoulder. The left hand, holding the stem of a small gourd, stops the string. It is played with a bow held in the right hand, the hair of which is rubbed with resin. The position of the notes is established as on the *ekatantri vina*. The higher notes are produced by going downward.[17]

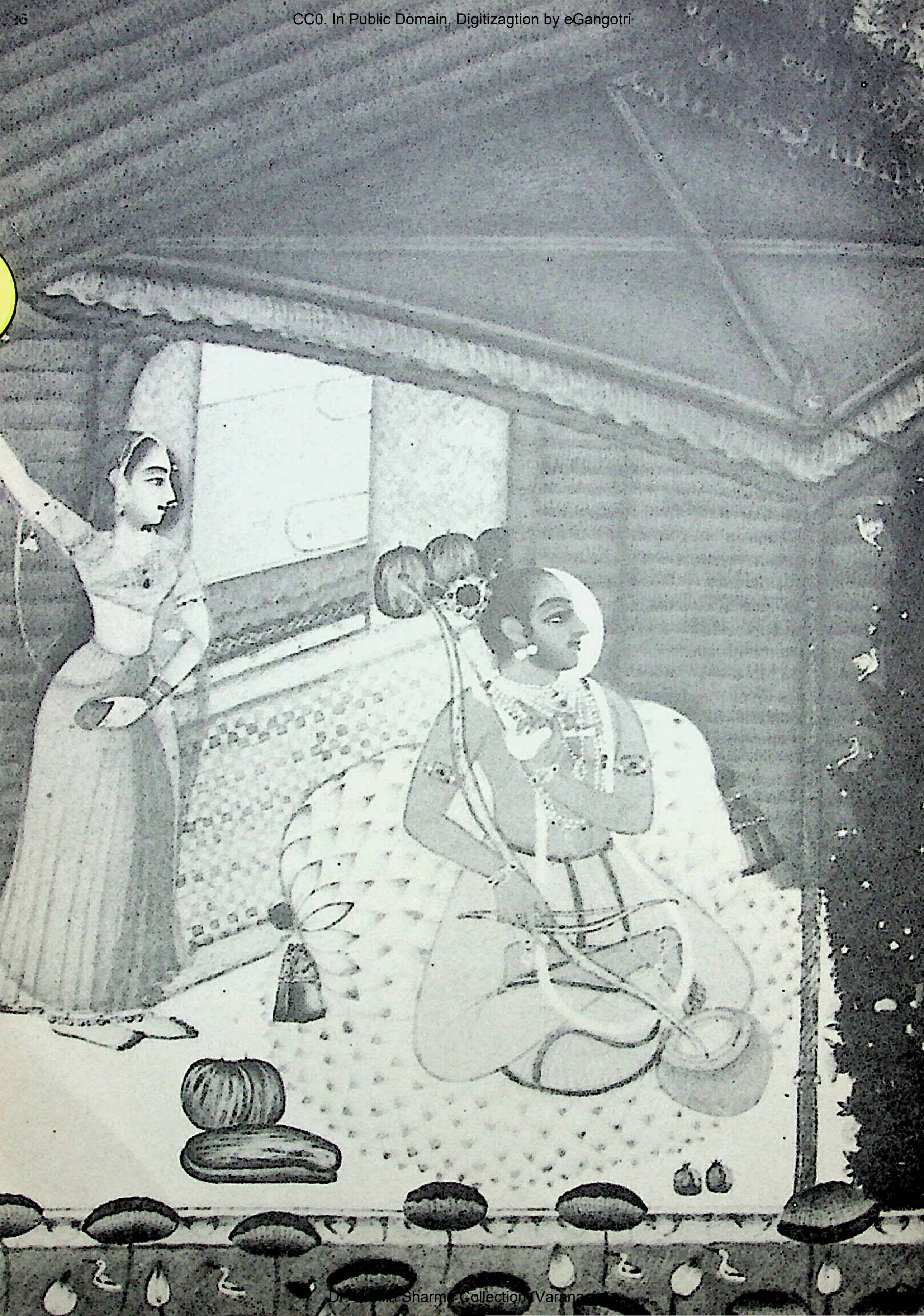
The very fact that this 13th century scholar takes credit for having invented a bowed instrument which he calls *nihsanka vina*, indicates that certain types of bowed instruments were highly respected and belonged to the realm of classical music.[18] According to Vemabhupala (c. 1400), however, the *pinaki vina* was only a prominent folk instrument. Obviously he had a low opinion of such instruments because he writes: "They will not be elucidated by me since they are notorious amongst villains."[19]

A second gourd resonator was apparently added to this instrument by the time of Maharana Kumbha, the ruler of Mewar and author of the *Sangitaraja* (1456).[20] In this form, the *pinaka* is also described by Abu'l Fazl (1588-89):

> The *pinak*... is of wood about the length of a bow and slightly bent. A string of gut is fastened to it and a hollow cup, inverted, is attached at either end. It is played like the *ghichak*, but in the left hand a small gourd is held which is used in playing.[21]

Although the *pinaka* was gradually pushed into the background, it was not totally ignored by later musicologists. Indeed, this wonderful relic of antiquity managed to survive until the beginning of the 19th century. [36] The Belgian, Francois Baltazard Solvyns (1810), was probably the last person to give a long description of the instrument, accompanied by an etching.[xi]

> This is also a very singular instrument, and very different from those which we use in Europe. The form of the *pennauck* is not unlike that of the *been* of which we have just been speaking, being likewise composed of two pumpkins; but they are joined by an iron rod, and one of them is much larger, and forms consequently a wider aperture than the other: the smaller is at the bottom, the larger at [the] top. The essential difference between this instrument and the *been* is that, in the place of chords it has but one string of wire, strongly stretched. To draw out the sound, a bow like that of a bass is prest upon this chord, at the same time that another part of it is struck or rubbed with a little stick. I confess that this strange music is far from being agreeable, and can be pleasing only to the ear of an Hindoo. The *pennauck* is now as seldom heard in India



> as in the other provinces of Asia; it is not even easy to find a musician who knows how to play upon it. The same may be said of the *been*. In former times both these instruments were much in vogue, and I have been assured that those who excelled in playing them were held in a certain degree of consideration, which has lasted even to our times. The masters of the *been* and the *pennauck*, being very few, are treated with great respect, and people flock round them to hear their singular music as a curiosity. They are to be heard only with the rich, as they never play for money before the public . . . [22]

Unfortunately, we will never be able to find out what kind of "strange music" was played on this instrument, because, soon after Solvyns wrote these lines, the *pinaka* died out.

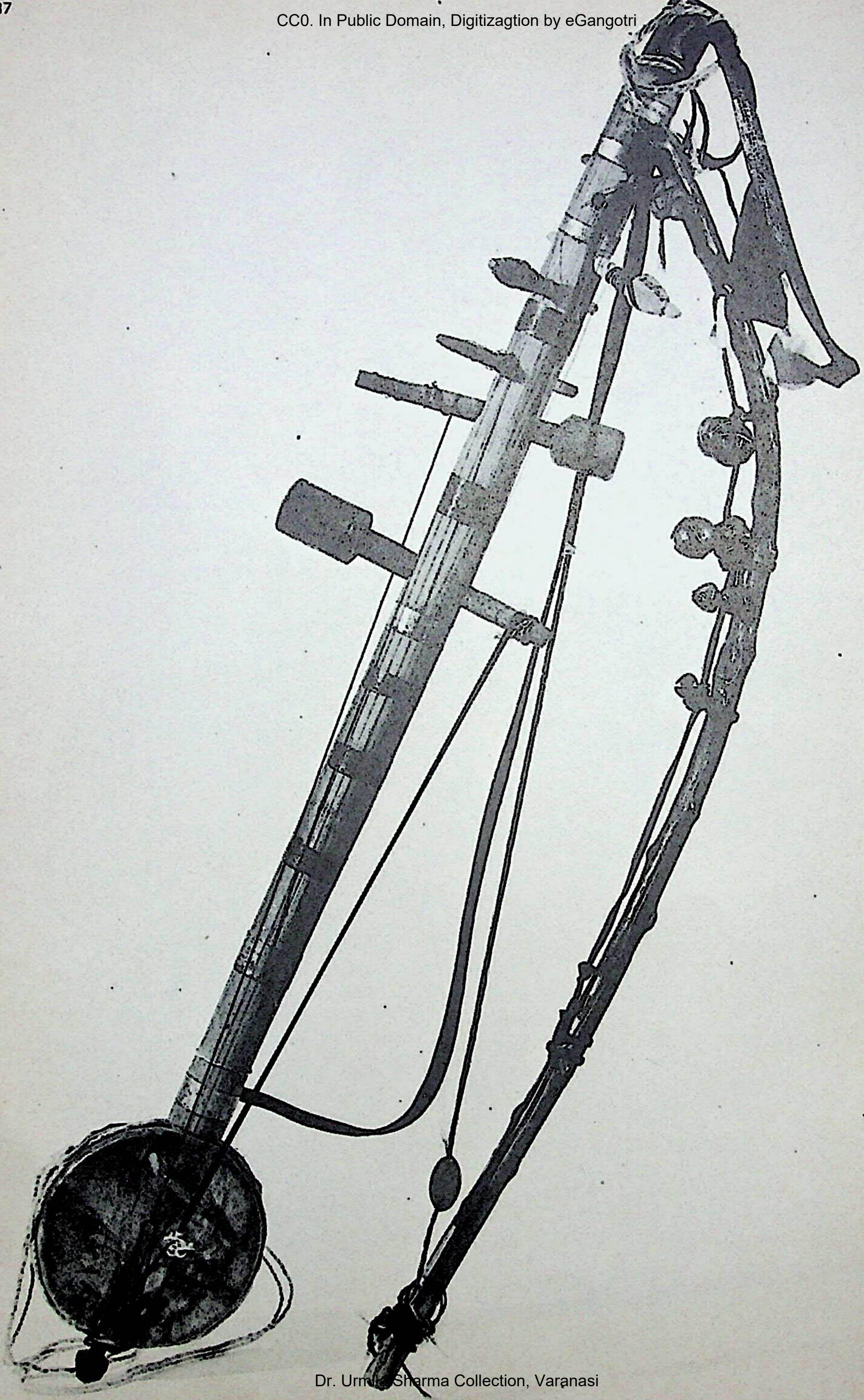
Using the detailed descriptions of Haripala and Sharangadeva, it would not be impossible to reconstruct the instrument. However, the *pinaka*, as described by H. Balfour in *The Natural History of the Musical Bow* (1899), was a simple bow without resonator and appears to have been a highly questionable reconstruction of the original instrument. It was sent to him by Raja S. M. Tagore, who, though a learned musicologist, was ill-informed about the *pinaka*.[23] Balfour, without having access to the sources available today, nonetheless came to the conclusion that, "a comparative study of the various allied types clearly points to the . . . former existence in India of a musical bow . . . with gourd-resonator."[24]

3.2 *Ravanahasta, a musicological puzzle*

The history of the southern musical bow presents far more problems than that of its northern counterpart. Like Nanyadeva, most musicologists mention it, but so far we have not succeeded in finding a complete description of the *ravanahasta*(*ka*) which, according to Jaap Kunst, was also known in Java in the 10th century A.D.[25]

The Ravana myth to which Nanyadeva referred was undoubtedly much older than the 12th century. In South India, the 7th century Shaivite saint-singers Appar Swamigal (or Tirunavukkarasar) and Tirugnanasambandar praised Ravana's musical genius and great devotion to Lord Shiva in their *Devaram* hymns. According to them, when Ravana tried to lift up Mount Kailash he was crushed under the mountain by Shiva. Ravana prostrated himself before the Lord and, in order to appease him, devised a seven-stringed harp (*yal*) strung with sinews pulled from his hand, with which he accompanied his Vedic hymns.[26] A similar story is told in the *Paumachariya* (c. 880 A.D.) by the Jain author Svayambhudeva. Here Ravana tried to please the Naga king Dharanendra by creating an instrument, which in Apabhramsha is called *ravanahatthaya*.[27] Unfortunately, it is not clear whether this instrument was plucked or bowed, nor what the instrument looked like.

In its most common form the *ravanahasta* was presumably a folk instrument which, in the words of Vemabhupala, was only played by 'beggars', and, therefore, impure and unworthy of treatment by Sanskrit musicologists.[28] However, there is some indication that this legendary instrument was also used in classical music, since the poetess Ramabhadrambha (early 17th century) relates that the *ravanahasta* was played by female court musicians of Tanjore.[29] That it was a musical bow, as suggested by Nanyadeva, is confirmed by Bartholomaeus Ziegenbalg (1711), who describes the instrument in his chapter about the music of Malabar:



> *Rawanastum*, which looks like a hunting bow, and has only a single length of gut as a bowstring, which is struck with a bow.[30]

Shortly thereafter, this bowed musical bow must have become obsolete, although the term *ravanahasta* survived. It is used today in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Rajasthan for a particular type of spike fiddle, which is to be found throughout India and is known by a variety of names.[37, 44] Very little is known about the age of these instruments, except that a 14th century Sufi, Shaikh Muzaffar of Bihar, refers in one of his letters to a yogi who sang religious songs to the accompaniment of a bowed *yaktara* (*ektara*).[31] Such spike fiddles were also referred to as *kingri* (see p. 53) and figure in a number of sculptures, but so far we have not been able to date them.[38, 39]

It was this kind of *ravanahasta* which caused musicologists a great deal of confusion after Pierre Sonnerat (1782) wrote that "the *Pandarons* [*Pandaram*], a type of monk of which there are many, play to accompany themselves on a kind of violin called *ravanastron*. It was given this name because the giant Ravanen, king of the island of Ceylon, invented it nearly five thousand years ago."[32] [40] The Ravana legend that Sonnerat heard was the same one which Appar had sung about a thousand years earlier, but, in course of time, the *ravanahasta* had undergone a metamorphosis. The original bow that Ravana twanged in the epics first evolved into a harp, subsequently to be replaced by a simple fiddle with a straight neck.

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Be that as it may, the Belgian musicologist F. J. Fétis (1856) was highly impressed by the 'primitive' *ravanahasta,* which he recognized as the truly original bowed instrument. He was one of the first Western scholars who had a passion for comparative musicology and wrote extensively about Indian instruments in his *Histoire Générale de la Musique.*[33] Since Fétis had no access to original literature on Indian music, and had never been to the East, his work contains many mistakes. Nevertheless, he reached the interesting conclusion that "*there is nothing in the West which has not come from the East.*" [34]

His theory about the Indian origin of the bow was received with great enthusiasm. Nearly all the writers on the history of musical instruments, in general, and the violin, in particular, and even authorities such as Curt Sachs (1915) and Francis W. Galpin (1937) accepted Fétis' idea.[35] Sachs went so far as to create more confusion by reproducing a drawing of a hypothetical *ravanahasta* with a head in the shape of a hand!

Criticism was bound to follow. It began to dawn on musicologists that the theory was based merely on a legend, and the supposition that the most primitive-looking instruments were also the most ancient. Research into the history of bowing continued, but no new historical evidence was forthcoming from India. For that reason, Sachs had to change his opinion, while Bachmann was unable to give sufficient attention to India either. Like several other scholars searching for the ancestor of the violin, he reached the conclusion that Central Asian short lutes with a 'double belly' were certainly bowed before 1000 A.D.

Besides short lutes (which will be discussed in the next chapter) there are two other families of bowed instruments in India, which should be taken into account, i.e. spike fiddles and the extinct musical bows. These instruments had a very humble beginning and were generally considered impure. Only during

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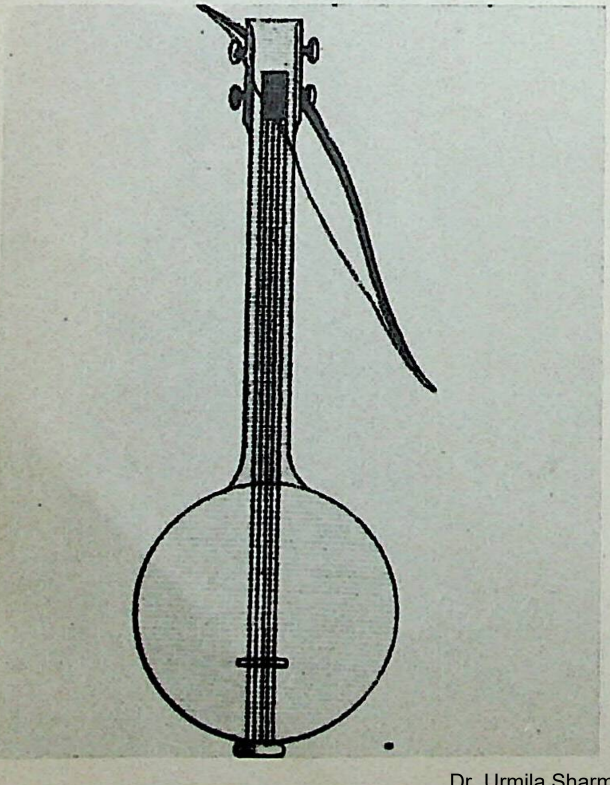

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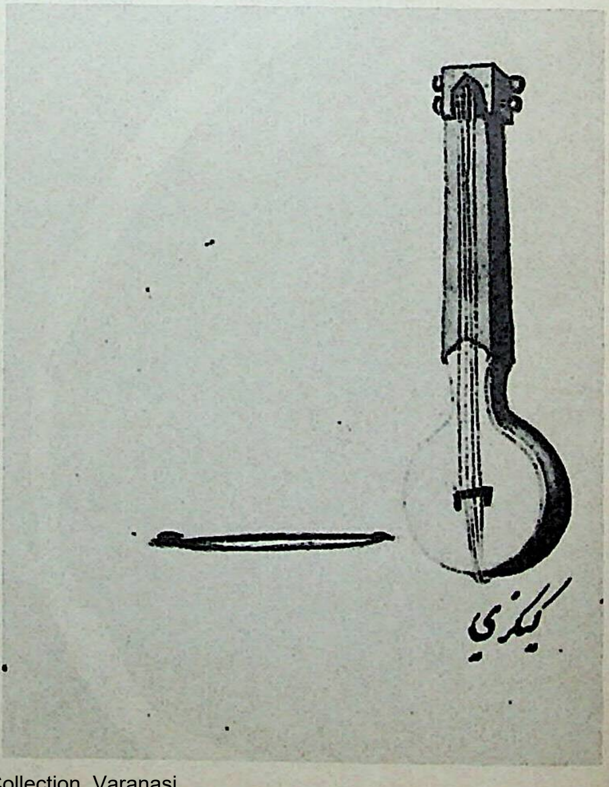

the 12th and 13th centuries does it appear that a few distinguished scholars recognized musical bows as 'classical' instruments. After that they fell into oblivion again, although the impression is widespread that, since time immemorial, bowing was widely practised as a folk art. Folk instruments were rarely depicted however, as they were neither prominent in the courts nor in the temples. For the same reason, it is also difficult to obtain written information about them, although it should be noted that until now it has only been feasible to study well-known musical treatises.[36]

We have seen that Nanyadeva's is the first known description of the playing bow. By no means does he create the impression of introducing a recent innovation. On the contrary, he gives both the *pinaka* and *ravanahasta* a traditional status by linking them with Shiva and Ravana. Moreover, the *Bharatabhashya* is a sort of commentary on Bharata's *Natyashastra*, and deals mainly with music of the past.

Nanyadeva's contemporary, King Someshvara, also mentions bowing in his encyclopaedic work *Manasollasa* (1131), while briefly summarizing the actions which are employed in playing different instruments:

> With one hand, with two hands, striking with a stick or a ball, rubbing with a bow (*dhanu agharsa*), blowing . . .[37]

He remarks that he does not describe all the stringed instruments, because they were not all designed for entertainment. This also perhaps explains why we do not find musical bows in sculpture. Possibly the sound of these instruments was too esoteric to be used in accompanying court singers and dancers.

Finally it should be remarked that with the works of Nanyadeva, Someshvara and Haripala it is difficult to establish their authenticity, because most of the treatises of their predecessors have been lost. To our knowledge, there exists not a single work on Indian music with a complete chapter on instruments between the 2nd and 12th centuries A.D. So it is difficult to speculate about the point of origin of the playing bow in India. In any case, it is apparent that the bow was already in general use in the west (Someshvara's capital was Kalyan and Haripala ruled Gujarat), the north-east (Mithila) and the south of India, and must have been introduced prior to the 12th century.

4 THE SARANGI: A HISTORICAL SKETCH

There are several opinions about when and how the sarangi came into existence. Hindu sarangi players usually mention Ravana as the inventor, but Muslim artists often give credit to a learned hakim of the ancient past. The story goes, writes Shahinda (1914), "that a hakim was once travelling on foot and, worn out with heat and fatigue, stopped to rest beneath a huge tree. Suddenly some sweet strains of music reached his ears; astonished, he listened attentively, and searched in vain from whence the sound came, until, at last, looking up, he discovered the object of his search. The dried skin of a dead monkey was stretched between two branches entangled with its dried guts, and the wind blowing through it caused melodious sounds. He carefully removed the skin and guts, replaced them on a construction of wood and after some years of labour, with due modifications and additions, completed the present-day sarangi."[1]

The same story was told to me by a musician, but here the leading figure was a Greek, Bu Ali Ibn Sina, supposedly a disciple of Pythagoras! "He was a renowned physician who treated his patients with herbs and music. Later on the sarangi was brought to India and improved upon."[2] Interestingly enough, the Greeks have a similar myth in which Hermes created the *lyra* from the shell of a tortoise, and it is not impossible that the myth travelled from Greece to India, or vice versa. Some Muslim sarangi players, however, tend to believe that their instrument came to India from abroad. This was also the opinion of the great musicologist Curt Sachs, and modern scholars, such as Jean Jenkins, have adopted his view.[3]

Abdul Halim Sharar, the author of many fascinating essays on the life and culture of Lucknow, assumes that the sarangi is a recent 'invention'. He credits it to Miyan Sarang (better known as Sadarang or Niamat Khan), the famous court musician of Emperor Mohammad Shah 'Rangila' (1719-1748), who will always be remembered for his great contribution to the popularization of *khayal*. Sharar's idea, which is repeated in several other books on Indian music, reflects a general ignorance about the age of the instrument, and a deeply rooted belief that the sarangi played an insignificant role in classical music before the beginning of the 18th century.[4]

The conclusion which a well-known French musicologist, C. Marcel-Dubois, arrives at is even more far-reaching. According to her, in Indian paintings and sculptures, "the bow only figures subsequent to the end of the seventeenth century," a fact which, as Werner Bachmann writes, "emerges from the detailed study undertaken by Marcel-Dubois and is confirmed by my own survey of Indian sources."[5] The relevant question, whether the sarangi is a late-comer to India, has never really been satisfactorily answered. There are also no answers as to when and how it entered the mainstream of classical music. Anyone who knows how complicated an instrument the sarangi is, or is aware of the many different types of instruments that the sarangi family contains, can hardly believe that these instruments evolved in the course of a few centuries, or that they entered India from abroad.

4.1 *Debut*

Leaving aside the stories of legendary hakims who supposedly invented the sarangi, very little is known about the origin and early history of the instrument. Unlike the *vina* (*bin*), for instance, whose evolution can be reconstructed step by step, the sarangi seems to emerge suddenly, during the days of Emperor Akbar's rule. The

A'in-i Akbari (The Institutes of Akbar, 1588-89), which, amongst other subjects, devotes considerable attention to the music of India, reveals that "the sarangi is smaller than the *rabab* and is played like the *ghichak*."[6] Obviously Abu'l Fazl, the author of this remarkable encyclopedia, is referring to a small instrument related to the lute (*rabab*) and bowed like the Persian spike fiddle (*ghichak* or *kamancha*). [42, 43]

Surdas (1483-1563), the great *bhakti* poet of Braj, whose melodious songs collected in the *Sursagar* inspired so many musicians, makes an interesting allusion to the sarangi in the following lines: "When Sarang made love with Nada he had to suffer the shot from a bow right in his heart."[7] This means literally that when the cuckoo or blackbird (*sarang*) made love with music (*nada*), it had to die. If *sarang* is interpreted as the bowed instrument, however, Surdas probably alludes to the humiliation and competition that sarangi players had to face when they entered the field of classical music.

A similar idea is voiced by Zafar Khan, a distinguished and erudite nobleman, who was at various times the governor of Kabul, Kashmir and Sind during the reign of Shah Jahan. Describing Agra in his *Masnavi*, he writes about the instruments frequently heard:

> *Nay* has its own tone, no doubt, but it is envious of *bansuli* which can change tone at its own sweet pleasure. *Kamancha* may have entered this country from outside but now it is one with those of Indian descent. *Sarangi* is broken and deeply wounded with the arrows of jealousy . . .[8]

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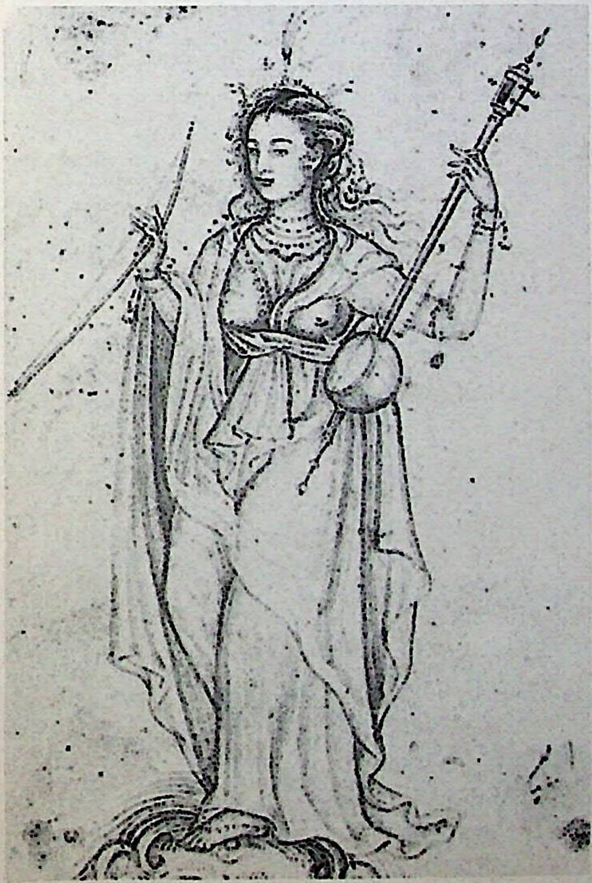

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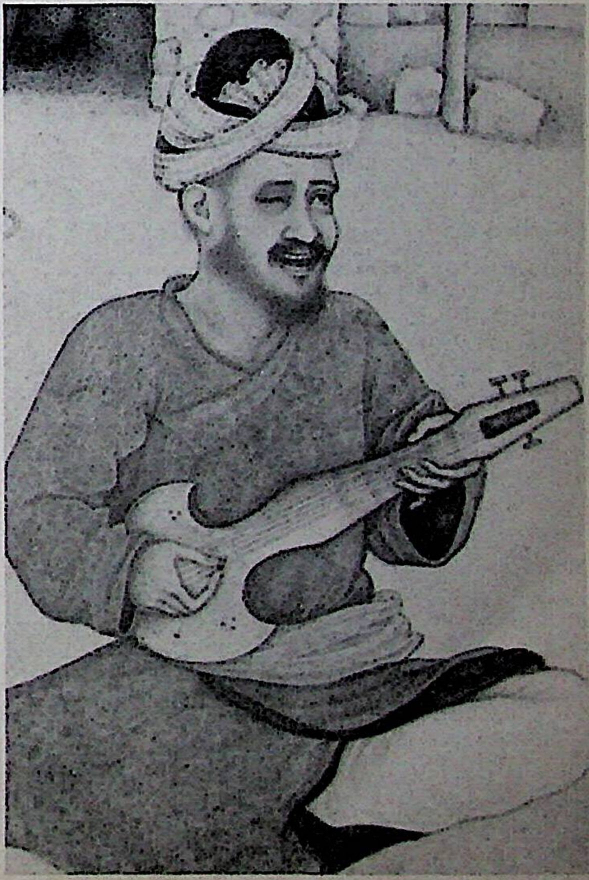


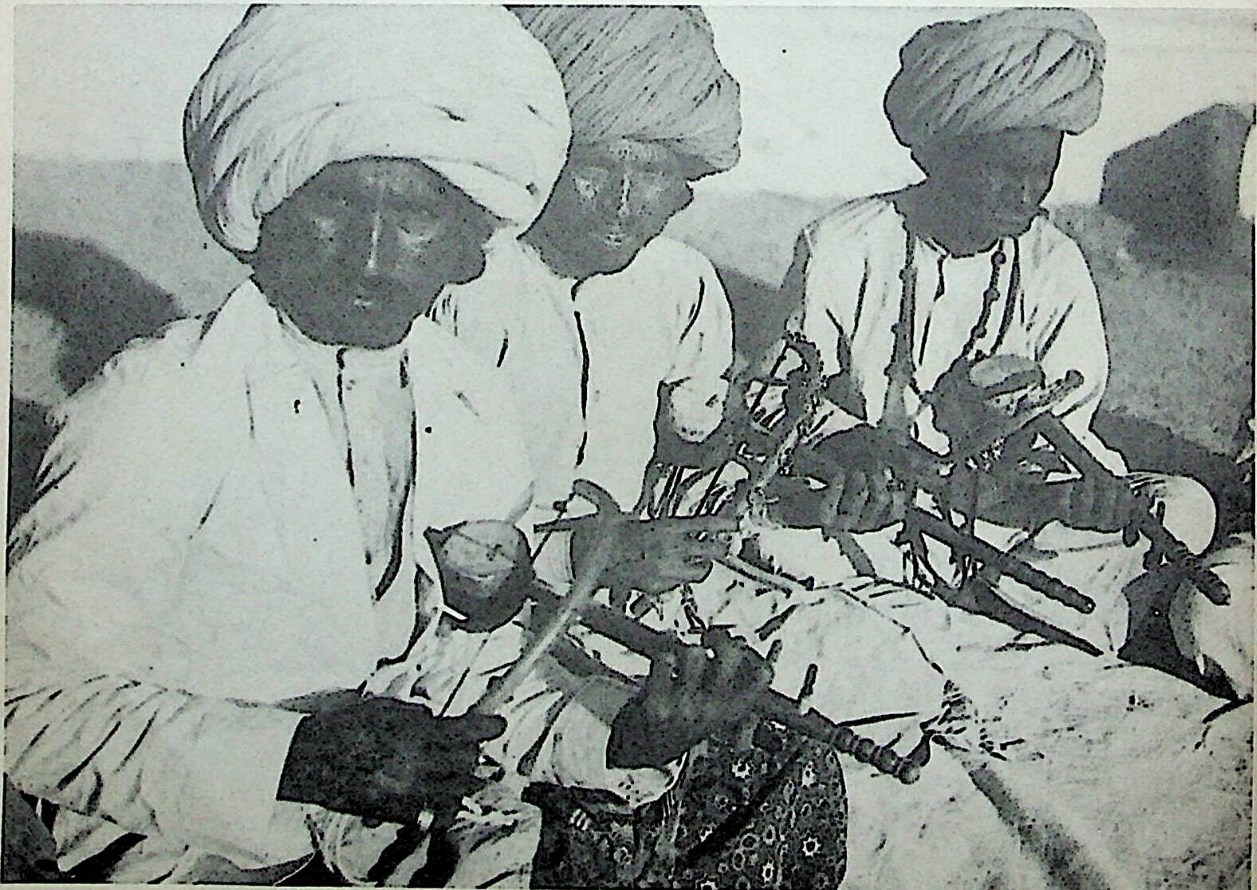
Does Zafar Khan mean that the sarangi was jealous of the *kamancha* with which it had to compete? Or does he make an allusion to the characteristic plaintive sound of the sarangi, expressing the feelings of a deeply wounded, jealous lover?

Ragadarpan (1665/66), the most informative work on Hindustani music in the 17th century, gives a vivid description of the music and musicians of the time. Its author, the scholar-musician Nawab Saif Khan 'Faquirullah', not only describes the sarangi but also portrays a well-known sarangi player, Allah Dad Dhadhi. "He belonged to Admad Danda near Jullundher. There was none like him in the whole Doaba area. He died when he was about 60." [9]

What Faquirullah has to say about the sarangi itself does not add much to our knowledge. He says: "It is usually referred to as the *ghichak* of Hindustan." The rest of his description is so strikingly similar to that of Abu'l Fazl, that one wonders if he copied it from the *A'in-i Akbari* or if both authors borrowed it from an earlier source which has now vanished.[10]

4.2 *How old is the sarangi?*

The simple fact that the sarangi was (and still is) a modest instrument, which belonged to living folk traditions, explains why very little is known about it before the 16th century. It is certainly a much older instrument and is mentioned in various important music treatises such as the *Sangitadamodara* (16th century), *Lahjat-i-Sikandar Shahi* (1487-1516), *Sangitaraja* (1453), *Ghunyat-ul-Munya* (1374/75) and *Sangitaratnakara*



(13th century).[11] But none of these works give a description of the sarangi, and it is, therefore, virtually impossible to know what it looked like and how it was played.

Even two centuries before its mention by Sharangadeva, the sarangi must have been a fairly popular instrument. It appears several times in Prakrit works of Jain religious tales (*katha*) and first in the *Kathakoshaprakarana*, written by Jineshvarasuri in 1052. The sarangi is classified as a stringed instrument in the following passage:

> *Gandharva* (melodic music) originates from three sources as follows: from a string, from a bamboo, from a human being.
>
> Of these, that which originates from a string is of several types, for instance, produced by the *vina, trisari, sarangi*, etc.[12]

In another passage, the author narrates that "*kakali* song, blended with the notes of the *vina, trisarika, sarangi*, etc., was sung."

Describing two *vidyadharas* singing in a Jain temple, Lakshmanagani also refers to sarangi accompaniment in his *Supasanahachariya* (1145):

> Having worshipped the Jina images with devotion and performing *vandana* with proper ceremony, they were singing songs accompanied by the musical notes of the *sarangi*.[13]

"Further in the narrative, the musical notes of [the] sarangi are described as drowned in the bustle created by the crowds of *vidyadharas* rushing in for worship," writes H. C. Bhayani.[14]

Apparently, the sarangi played an important role in Jain religious music during the 11th and 12th centuries, and, like its modern counterpart, it was used to accompany singing. The fact that it is first mentioned in popular narratives which were written in Prakrit, the language of the masses, seems to indicate that the sarangi was primarily an instrument for folk and religious music. From the given passages, it is difficult to assert,however, whether this sarangi was the forefather of today's sarangi. It is somewhat surprising that bowed instruments are not represented in the splendid sculptures of the Jain temples of Gujarat and Rajputana, built between the 10th and 13th centuries. Moreover, in Gujarat, the term 'sarangi' is loosely applied today to any bowed instrument, whether it is a 'real' sarangi or a *ravanhatho*, a spike fiddle.[44]

Haripala, a king of Gujarat, also makes a thought-provoking statement in this respect. He writes: "In local language the *kinnari* is called *saranga vina* . . ."[15] This is followed by a long and detailed account of the *kinnari vina*.[45] The description of this instrument in the *Sangitasudhakara* (middle of the 12th century) leaves no doubt that the author is portraying the ancestor of the *bin* or *jantar*. Nowhere does he mention the use of a bow, although it is known that such instruments were occasionally played with a bow.[46]

That the *kinnara* was a much older instrument is evident from Sanskrit sources and the writings of Arab scholars and geographers. Ibn Khurdadhbih (c. 820-912) says:

> The Indians have the *kankala* which has but one string stretched across a gourd. And it serves them in place of the lute or harp . . .[16]

Other Arab scholars refer to it as *kingra*, which was either a monochord stick zither with one gourd (cf. *ekatantri vina*), or a spike lute (cf. *ektara*). Apparently, the word *kingra* is derived from *kinnara*.

The great medieval poet, Amir Khusrau (1253-1325), writes:

> . . . the Indians, who only know how to play on the *kingra*. How funny that their *ajab rud* itself bares its teeth (i.e. laughs) to the *kingra* and those who play it. When a Hindu plays his *ajab rud*, it laughs in his hands.[17]

It is obvious that the *kingra* was a very popular instrument, otherwise Amir Khusrau would not have referred to the Indians as "a race of *kingra* players." S. Q. Fatimi believes that it was a bowed instrument and he may be right, but Abu'l Fazl and Faquirullah fail to mention the bow when they discuss the instrument.[18] According to them, "the *kingara* resembles the *vina*, but it has two strings of gut and smaller gourds." It must have been different from the *kinnara* which had a long stick and "three gourds and two wires."[19]

However, Fatimi's interpretation of the *ajab rud* as an instrument resembling the *sarinda* is truly praiseworthy. "It does not have lips but [opens] its mouth in laughter", writes Amir Khusrau.[20] The open 'mouth' (i.e. upper resonance chamber of the belly) is indeed very characteristic of the bowed *sarinda* and *kobuz* species. The fact that *ajab rud* means 'a strange-looking *rud* (lute)' also supports this view.

Were the *kingra* and *kinnara* exclusively plucked instruments? An old sarangi player from Banaras told me that yogis playing the *chikara* sometimes refer to it as

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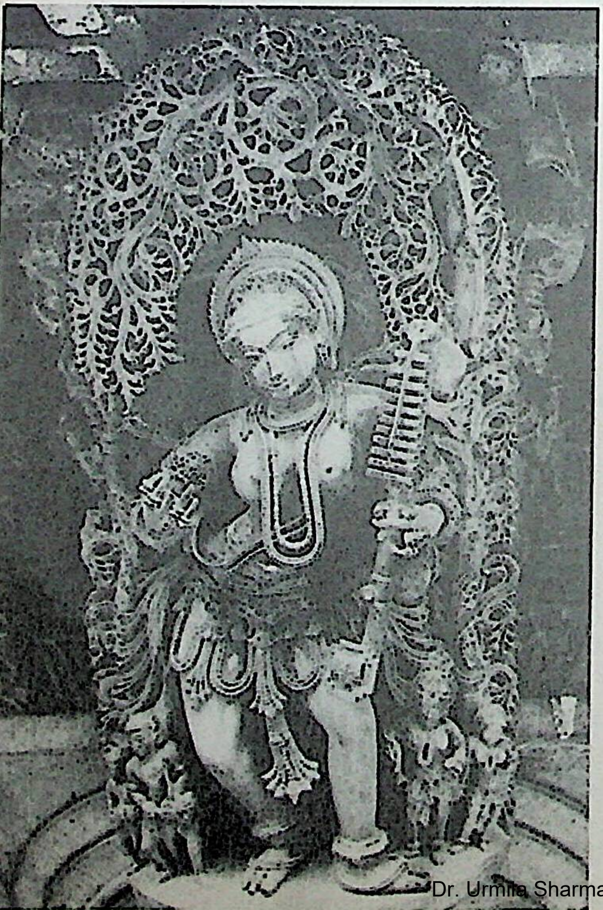

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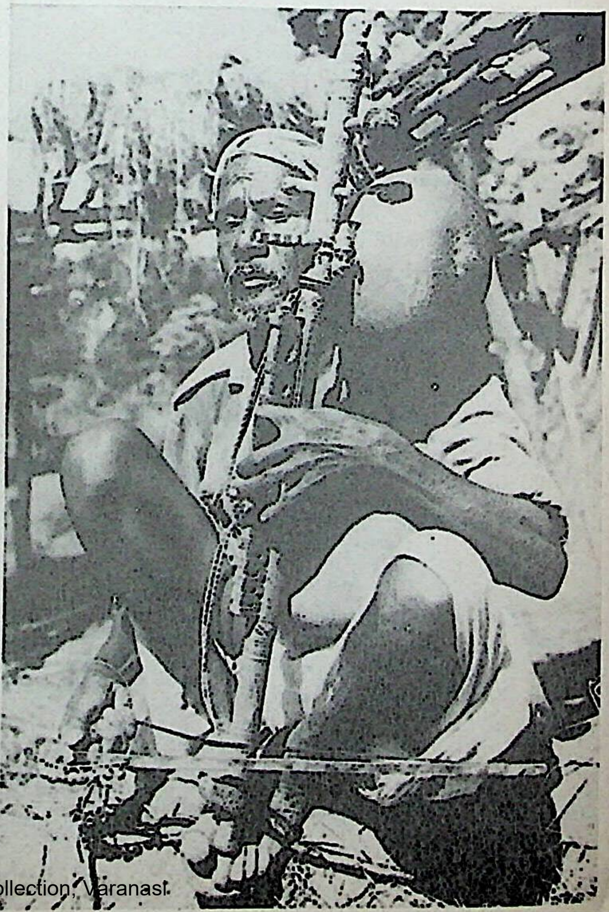

kinnari, while Shahab Sarmadee reports that he "found a whole tribe of these people (called Kingiriya, belonging to a beggar community in Manauri, one of the towns of the Sadar Tahsil of Allahabad district) playing on such bowed instruments which they call *kingri*."[21] An old drawing of a *kingri*, resembling a *chikara*, also demonstrates that bowed short lutes were commonly referred to as *kingri*.[41] The belly of this instrument is bowl-shaped, however, like the resonator of the southern *kinnaram*, of the *agappai kinnari* of Tamil Nadu, the *kingri* of Madhya Pradesh, the *tingari* and *koka* of Maharashtra and the *kendera* of Orissa, which is made from half a coconut shell or a small gourd, covered with parchment. These crude spike fiddles usually have one or two strings and the neck is made of bamboo.[22]

To summarize, the terms *kingra* and *kinnara* denote a great variety of plucked and bowed stringed instruments. What Sachs said about the *rabab* also holds true for these instruments: "It is hardly ever possible to draw conclusions from the word *rebab* alone about the nature of a particular instrument . . ."[23]

With this in mind, we should be cautious in interpreting the earliest references to the sarangi. As one of the meanings of the word 'sarangi' is bow, and from the 16th century onwards (when the first descriptions appear) sarangis were always bowed, it is tempting to see the 11th century sarangi as a bowed instrument too. Is it possible that Haripala confused matters when he compared the *saranga vina* with the *kinnari*? Was there perhaps also a bowed folk *kinnari* in his time, which was called sarangi, as it still is today? Or were the *saranga vina* and sarangi different instruments altogether? It is hard to believe this, but, without any evidence, a conclusion would be uncalled for. The vital question, as to whether the sarangi was a bowed short lute in the 11th century, still remains unanswered.

Equally problematic is the question of where the sarangi originated. Since Curt Sachs suggested that bowed short lutes came into existence in Central Asia, several western scholars have been convinced that these instruments were introduced "in a somewhat changed form to the Indian sub-continent."[24] Undoubtedly, there is a morphological relationship between the *kobuz* (*kobys*) and instruments of the *sarinda* group, and W. Bachmann observes:

> The two-stringed instrument noted by Ibn Khurdadhbih is obviously the *qobuz*, to which there are frequent references in Central Asian, and more specifically in Uigur, sources from the ninth century onward . . . Not until after the year 1000 do we find positive proof that the *qobuz* was played as a bowed instrument.[25].

But was it the same type of *kobuz* that survives today? To my knowledge, neither Bachmann nor any other scholar has been able to obtain any textual or pictorial evidence which reveals the structure and shape of the 10th century *qobuz*. However, Bachmann does quote a 14th century Chinese source, the *Yüan Shih:*

> The *hu-ch'in* is constructed like a *ho-pi-szu* (*kobuz*) with a curled neck, a dragon's head and two strings. It is thrummed with a bow. The string of the bow is from a horse-tail.[26]

The arched neck and two strings are indeed characteristic of the present-day *kobuz*, while the dragon's head is a typical Chinese decoration. Apparently, the *kobuz* was the forefather of the Chinese *hu-ch'in*, and for over ten centuries it probably survived almost unchanged. It may have been the ancestor of the *sarinda* as well, although

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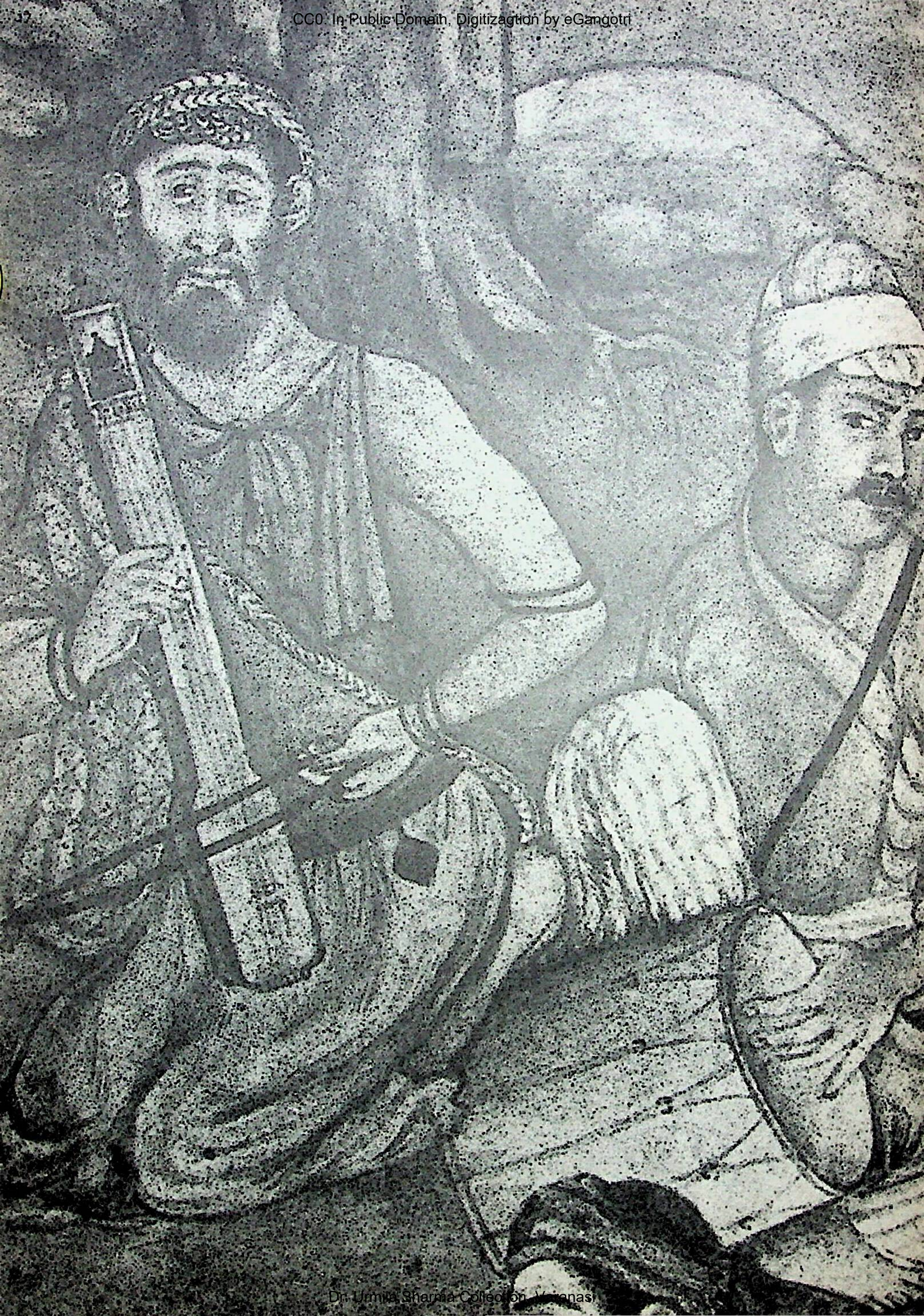

there is no positive proof that the bow migrated from Central Asia to India. It may very well have been the other way around.

Finally, the sarangi family has such an overwhelming number of different species, that one wonders if it is correct to think in terms of only one ancestral type. Judging from the shape and distribution, there is little doubt in my mind that sarangis (and *chikaras*) are authentic Indian instruments. This was also the opinion of Zafar Khan and other Persian scholars writing about Indian musical instruments. They made a clear distinction between foreign instruments such as the *kamancha* or *nay*, and indigenous instruments such as the sarangi or *bansuli*.

4.3 *Singing and playing bards*

More revealing than literature are the paintings. The first one to feature a sarangi player dates back to the beginning of the 17th century. [47] It depicts a left-handed fakir, playing his instrument under a tree, accompanied by a musician playing a *dhol* (or *duhul*). Four men, one of them a prince (perhaps Dara Shukoh), are listening to the music. The painting shows a number of relevant details. The sarangi has a box-shaped resonator with a broad stringholder at the bottom, a long, wide neck, a pegbox with an arch-shaped opening, and, on top of it, a characteristic decoration. It has four playing strings, six or seven resonance strings, a nut and a bridge.

Its resemblance to the present-day Gujaratan sarangi is indeed remarkable. The main difference is that the belly of the latter instrument is slightly waisted. Listening to its last interpreter, Hayat Mohmad Langa,[27] we can easily imagine ourselves hearing the sarangi player in the painting over three and a half centuries

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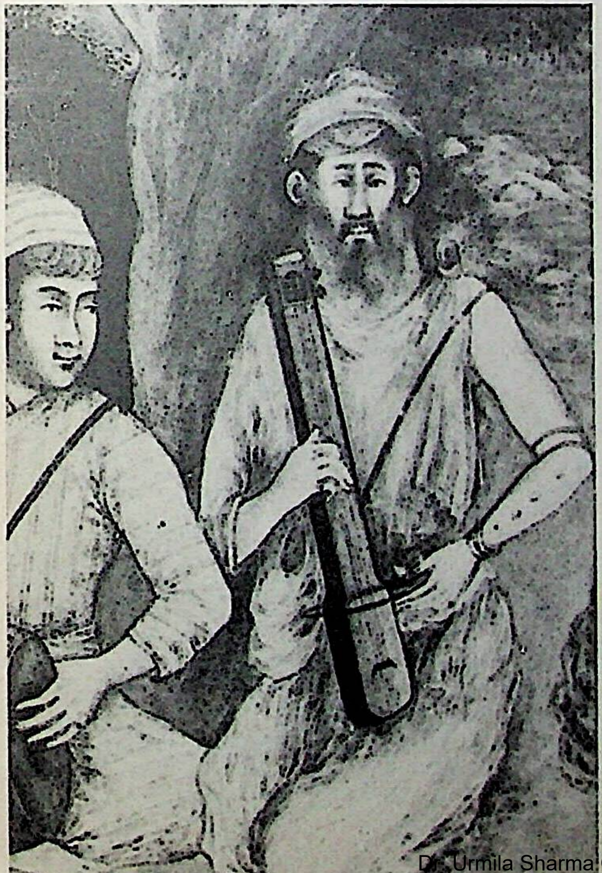

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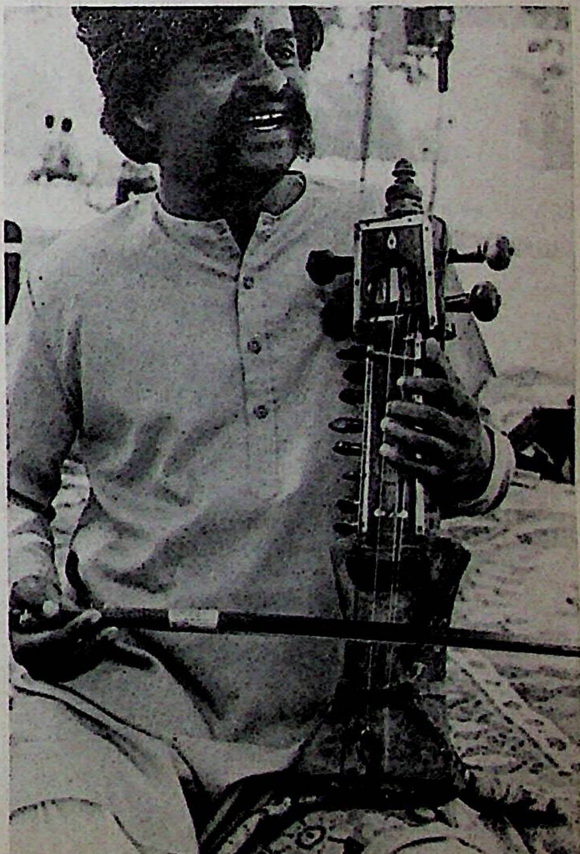
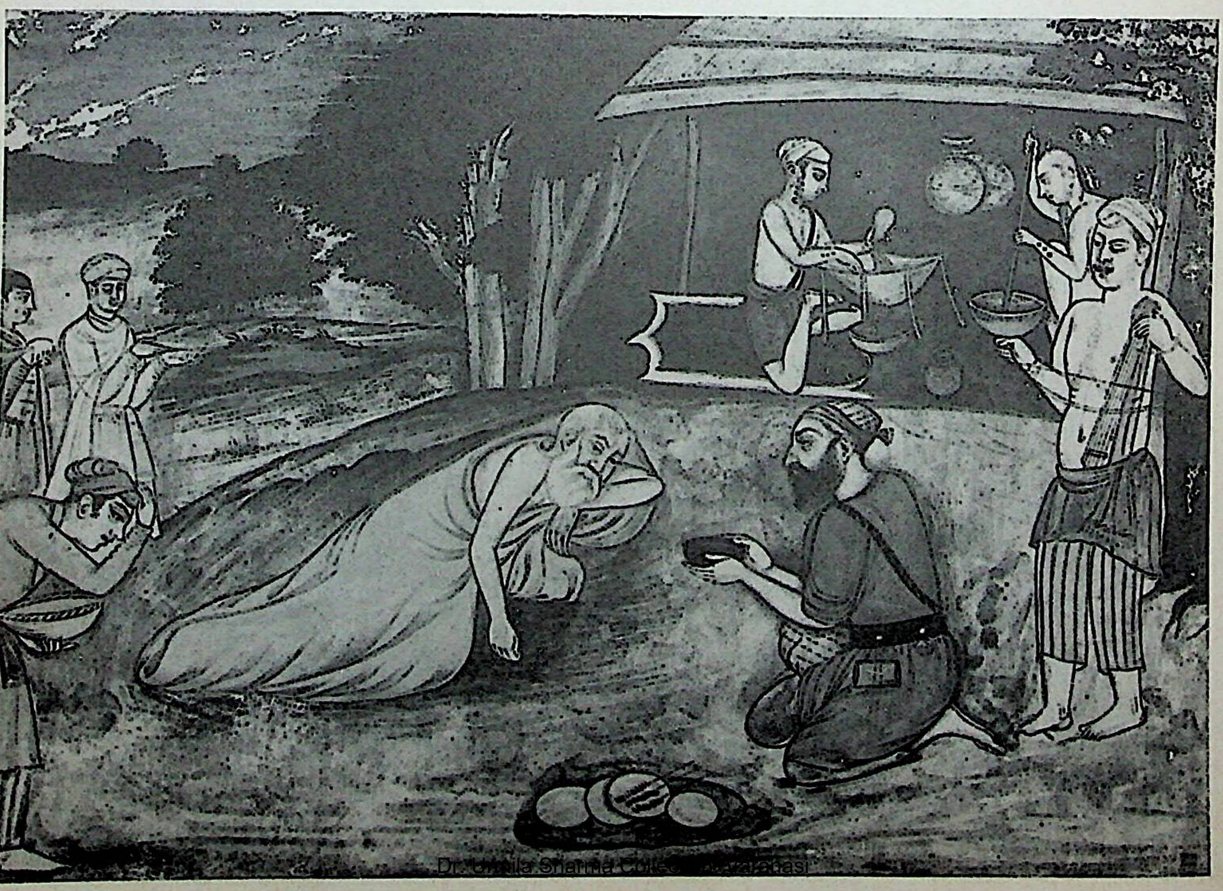


ago.[49] Time seems to have stopped. Was he perhaps Allah Dad Dhadhi? He must certainly have been a famous musician, because he features in at least three paintings, each in a slightly different setting.[28] [48] Whoever the sarangi player was and wherever his instrument originated—in Rajasthan, Gujarat, the Punjab or Uttar Pradesh—it is obvious that his sarangi was a sophisticated bowed instrument which, for centuries to come, would survive virtually unchanged.

The early presence of sympathetic (or resonance) strings on this sarangi deserves our attention. In Europe, they probably appeared first on a lyra viol, and, according to John Playford (1652), such a viol with wire sympathetic strings was an invention of the composer Daniel Farrant.[29] Later, in the 18th century, they were a common feature of the viola d'amore and the baryton. The Norwegian Hardangerfele also has four resonance strings.

Curt Sachs, one of the few musicologists who has paid attention to this subject, writes: "Sympathetic strings had come to England from the Near East, apparently in the sixteenth century."[30] Speculating about their place of origin, he believes that the Indians adopted them from the Persians.[31] Yet, in Persian, Central Asian and Middle Eastern instruments they rarely occur, while in India, they are commonly found in almost all stringed instruments. In all probability, sarangi players were the first to realize that the addition of a number of wire strings under the main strings produced a silvery echo, and it is not impossible that this idea was first adopted by a Western instrument maker, after he saw a sarangi brought to Europe by a traveller in the 16th century.

Several other Mughal paintings from the 17th century depict box-shaped sarangis. In one of these, a Muslim saint lies in front of a hermitage while



attendants prepare and offer him *bhang*, and a half-naked fiddler creates a congenial atmosphere.[32][50] In front of another hermitage three musicians play together, a *binkar*, a *sarangiya* and a drummer. [51]

Another fascinating painting shows a singing and dancing sarangi player with a dervish, who appears to be in a state of trance.[33][52] The three-stringed sarangi resembles a *chikara* but is lacking in fine detail. The painter seems to have forgotten to complete the instrument, since the pegbox is missing! A similar type of sarangi is seen in the hands of a young musician who entertains a saint, probably Kabir, shown weaving. Here the instrument is carefully depicted.[34][53]

A wonderful bowed instrument played by a singing ascetic also appears in a number of paintings.[35][54, 55] It has a large belly and a short neck, and slightly resembles a *sarinda*. More fanciful is the instrument which is being played before a half-naked *sadhu*, sitting on a tiger-skin in front of his hermitage.[56] The resonator of this instrument consists of two identical parts and it has two bridges! Whether such an instrument really existed, or was just part of the imagination of the artist, we will never know.

Other Mughal paintings from the 17th century show different types of sarangis, but all that these paintings have in common is the setting. The fiddler always sings and plays in the vicinity of holy men, Muslim or Hindu. His sarangi is small, light and portable, and this, combined with its expressive sound quality, makes it an ideal instrument to accompany devotional songs. Is it a coincidence that Lakshmanagani (1145) also talks about the sarangi accompanying religious songs?

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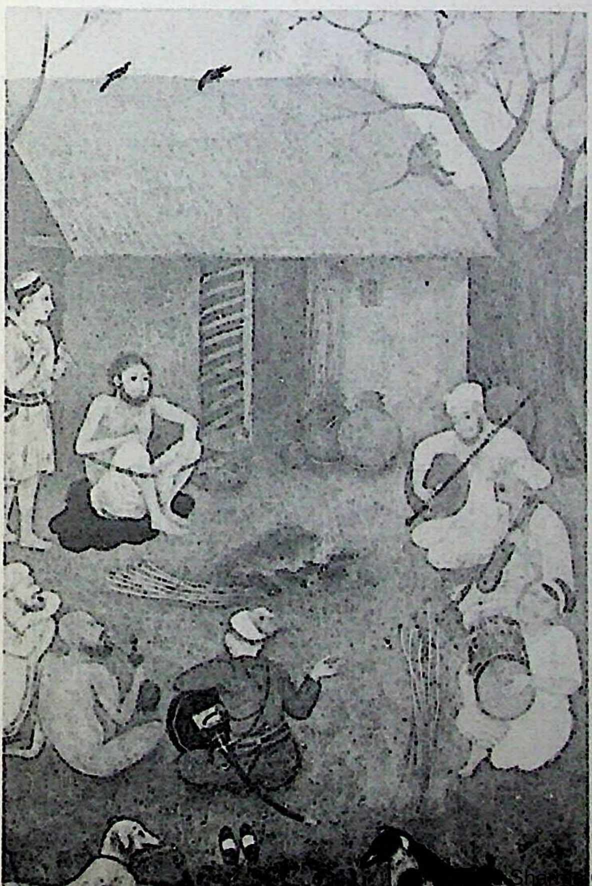

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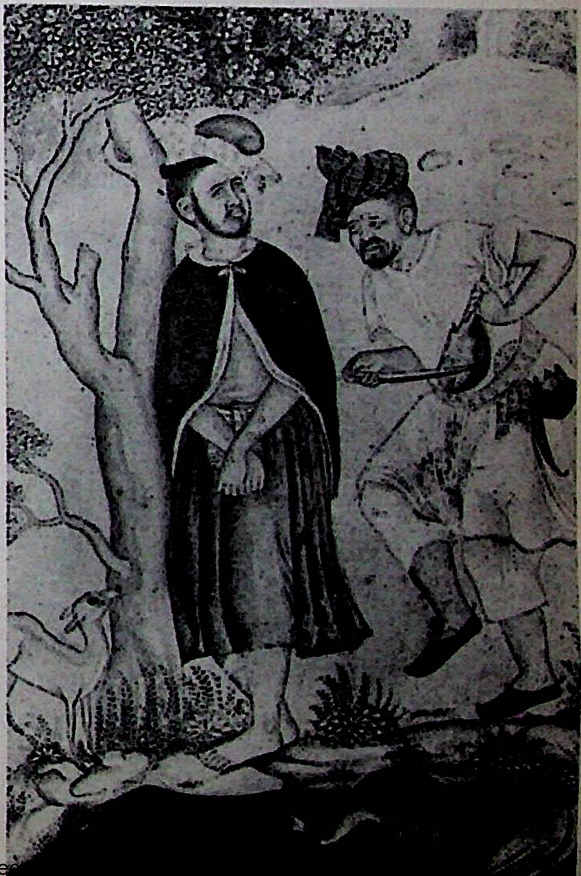

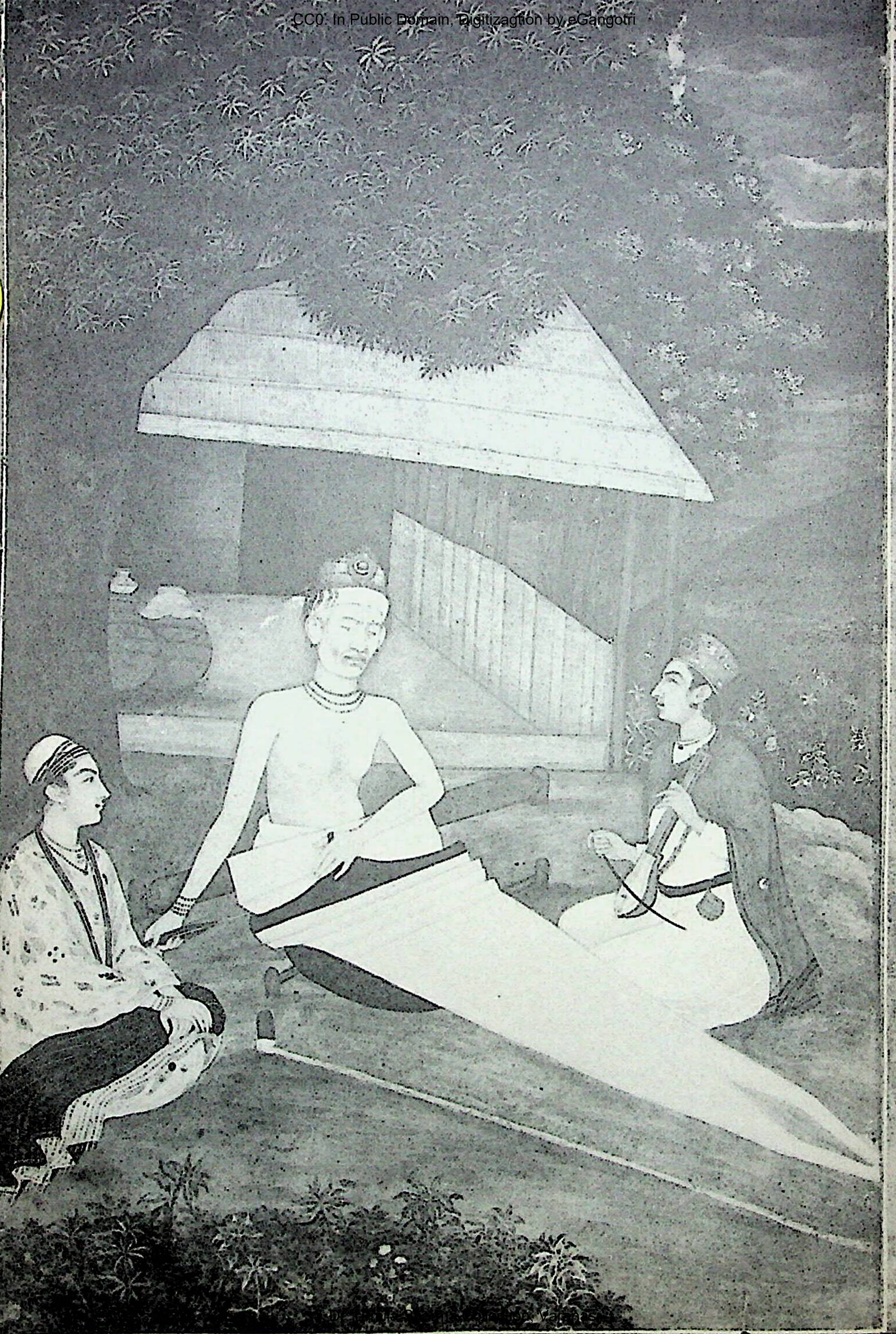

For many centuries, the wandering street musician or mendicant with a sarangi in his hands was a familiar sight in the North Indian countryside.[57] Even today, one can encounter a *baba* singing ballads about the life and deeds of Lord Shiva (*bam lahara*), or a Bhartrhari yogi playing his sarangi. "They sing the song of a Gopi-chand and Maigan-nath and the teachings of Bhartrhari. No Hindu domestic festival is complete unless these Bhartrharis come and sing their songs. They use the ochre-coloured clothes of the sannyasins. But they are by religion Mahomedans. They seem to be the descendants of their yogi forefathers and have inherited their yogi songs as well", writes S. Das Gupta.[36]

Until recently, according to D. C. Vedi, the sarangi was very frequently heard in the temples of Punjab and Uttar Pradesh. "It was played with *kirtan* and *bhajan,* and also with classical songs. Most of the names of these artists are now forgotten, but I remember a very good sarangi player, Shri Ram of Kotah, who always played in the Nathadwara *mandir.* He was a disciple of Fida Hussain Khan, an uncle of the late Faiyaz Khansahib."

Stringed instruments played an important role in the devotional music (*kirtan*) of the Sikhs. "The songs of Guru Nanak were sung to the accompaniment of the music of the *rabab* and the rhythm of *mridang*", writes Bhai Gurdas.[37] Mardana, a Muslim, was his famous lute-playing companion, whilst at the time of the second, third and fourth Gurus, professional *rababis* were also appointed to sing and play at the court. But, according to Macauliffe, 'two-stringed violins' were used in the court of Guru Angad (1504-1552) as well.[38] Under Guru Arjan

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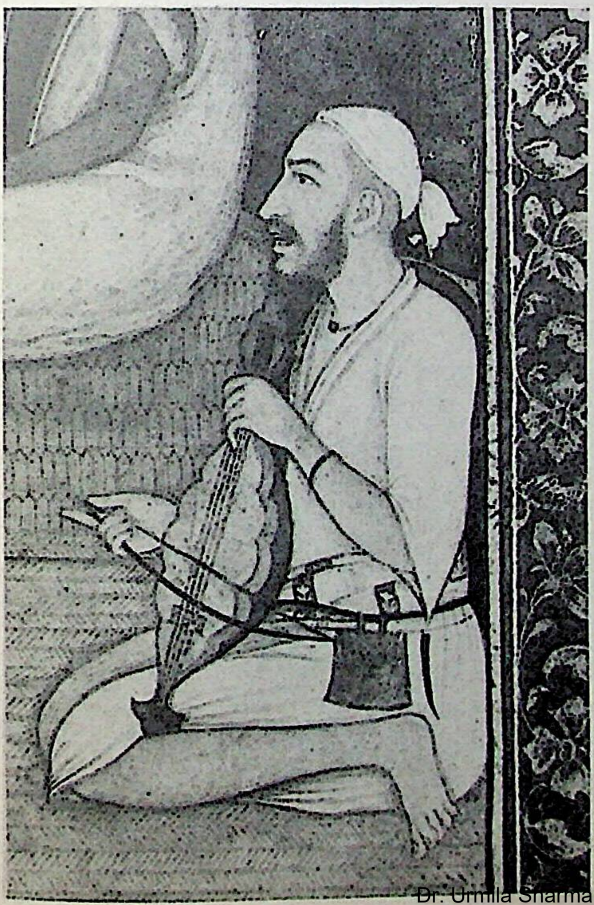

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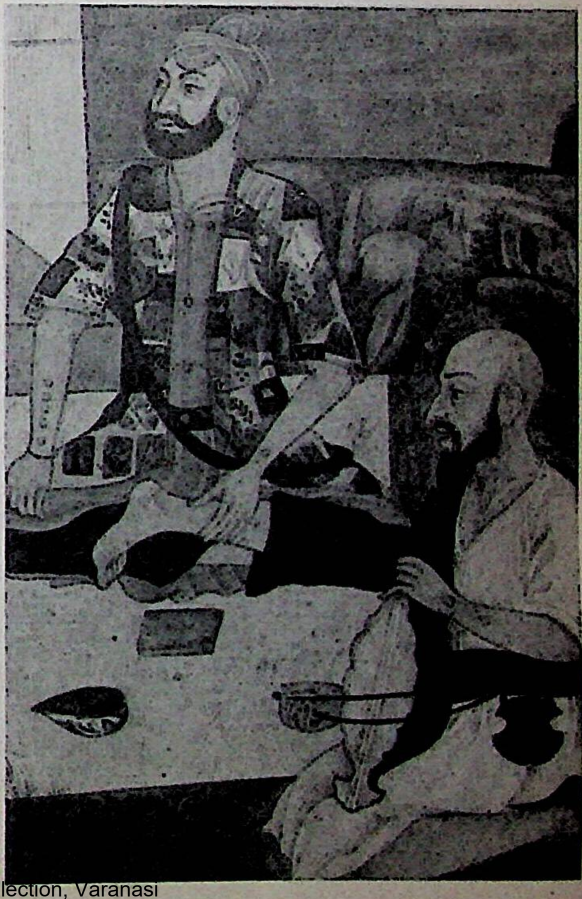
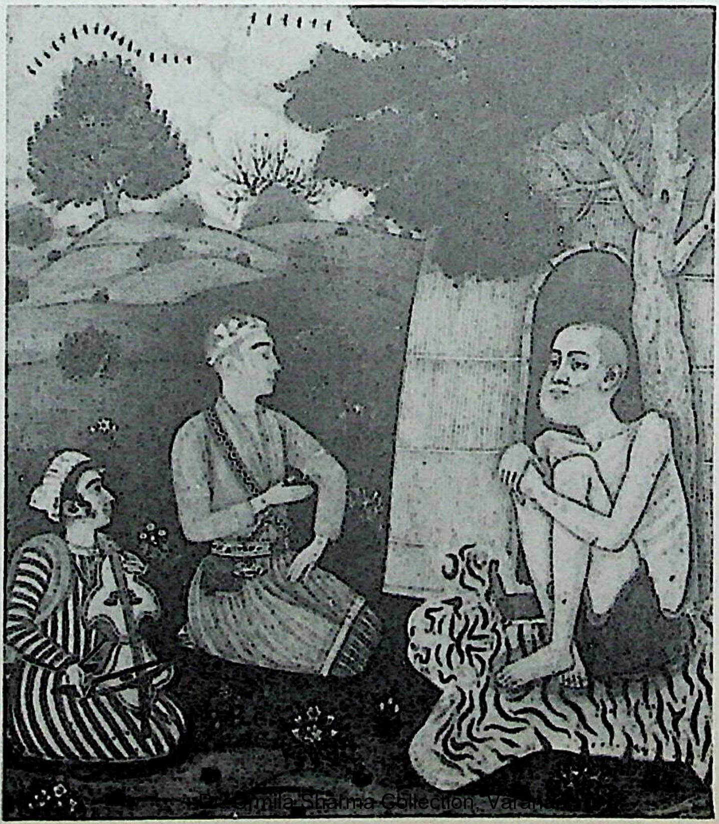


(1563-1606), professional lutanists were replaced by non-professional musicians (*ragis*). He himself was a great singer and played the *sarinda*.[39] His follower, Guru Hargobind (1595-1644), was a generous patron of music. "He established a new class of singers, called *dhadhi*. They sang of heroic deeds of old warriors and thereby inspired the Guru's soldiers. Bhai Abdullah was a great devotee of the sixth Guru. . . Abdullah played on the sarangi while Natha played on the *dhadh*."[40]

Thus, in the Punjab, the *sarinda* and sarangi rose in importance during the 16th and 17th centuries. Sikh Gurus and other open-minded saint-singers in Northern India had discovered that fiddlers were the ideal musicians to sing and play their spiritual songs. Sufism and the *bhakti* movement flourished, and, in both of them, singing and dancing were essential means for bringing about a direct experience of God. "The new devotional religion. . . fostered ideas of brotherhood and equality before the loving Lord, and its saints, drawn from all levels of society, proclaimed that, in *bhakti*, caste had no meaning."[41] With Ramananda (c. 1400-70), Kabir (c. 1440-1518), Raidas (15th century), Tulsidas (c. 1532-1623), Dadu (16th century), Mira Bai (c. 1503-73) and Surdas (c. 1483-1563) the devotional movement reached its peak in the Hindi-speaking areas. This probably explains why low-caste sarangi players in the 16th century (or perhaps earlier) began specializing in devotional songs, and why the first sarangi players depicted in the paintings always stand face to face with a holy man.

4.4 *Dhadhis, professional minstrels*

However, not all fiddlers were yogis, fakirs or pious devotees of God. Travelling overland in Afghanistan (immediately after crossing the border of Baluchistan), Robert Coverte had a rather awkward experience on the first day of April, 1610:



> . . .earely in the morning, and about breake of day wee met with tenne or twelve men playing Fiddles, as if they had come in friendly maner to welcome us, but indeed they were no better then Theeves that intended to rob and pillege us, for by the Sun rising wee were beset round with them and their companions, whose certaine number wee could not discerne nor know.[42]

Writing about the brave Rajputs, the famous Venetian traveller Niccolao Manucci, who spent the major part of his life in India (1656-1717), observes:

> When they draw near to the enemy, their musicians begin to sing songs in a loud voice, with a violin accompaniment, in praise of their courage. These musicians are also on horse-back and well armed, all drunk with opium, their eyes flaming and red. . . I have sometimes seen some of them so impatient that, on hearing the violins strike up, though the enemy was still far off, they rode out of their squadron, and, putting their horses to their full speed, galloped like madmen into the middle of the foemen, and there sacrificed their lives.[43]

Were the 'fiddles' or 'violins' perhaps *sarindas,* and the Rajput musicians *dhadhis?* Richard F. Burton, writing in 1851 about the Sindhi minstrels, provides part of the answer: "In former times they used to accompany the head of the house to battle, armed with sword and shield, with the *surindo* or *rebec* in hand, praising the brave, and overwhelming cowards with satire and abuse. . ."[44]

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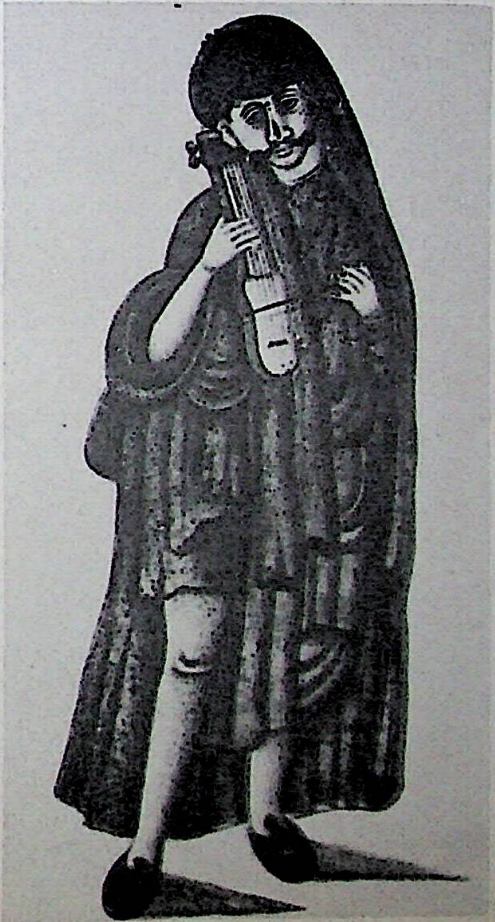

We have seen that Punjabi *dhadhis* at the time of Guru Hargobind were appointed to sing about the heroic deeds of warriors, and that the *sarinda* and sarangi had taken the place of the *rabab.* It is somewhat surprising, therefore, to read that, according to Abu'l Fazl, "the *dhadhis* are the Punjabi singers who play upon the *dhadda* and the *kingara.* They chiefly chant the praises of heroes in the field of battle and lend fresh spirit to the fight."[45] There seems to be little doubt now that this particular *kingra* was not an instrument resembling the *vina* or the present-day Punjabi *king,* but a bowed instrument akin to the *sarinda,* which was also used by the Pathan, Baluchi, Sindhi and Rajput minstrels accompanying the armies. Either this instrument was referred to by several names and indigenous writers preferred to use the mythological word *kingra,* or the terms *sarinda, saroz, chikara,* etc. are of more recent date.

In any case, the fact that Guru Amardas (1479-1574) calls himself a *dhadhi,*[46] a minstrel of God, demonstrates that these professional singers (and fiddlers) were quite established by this time. Surdas also mentions them several times, and, in the *A'in-i Akbari,* five *dhadhis* are listed among the principal musicians of Akbar's court; four of them were singers and one played the *karna* (long trumpet).[47] In the court of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1580-1627), the *dhadhis* were second in rank. In the words of one of the Sultan's songs:

> *Atai, dhadhi* and *gunijan,* the three classes of musicians should be regarded as the master of the three worlds, the three-eyed god, Trilochan. Though their languages may be different, yet the object of both Muslims and non-Muslims is the same.[48]

According to Faquirullah (1665/66), *dhadhis* were the oldest community of musicians, and originally Rajputs. They sang *karkha,* which was "composed in four to eight lines to sing the praises of the war-lords, the brave soldiers, and to narrate the affairs of battles and war."[49] He also informs us that the Punjabi *dhadhis* played on the *dhadh* (a small-sized *dhol* to which they owed their name), and sang heroic ballads, called *bar.* They were sung by at least two persons; the ustad, who was the leader of the group, tunefully recited the opening lines while the *shagirds* (disciples) followed, sometimes repeating the lines, sometimes returning to the opening section. Faquirullah further portrays a number of famous *dhadhis;* the majority of them were singers and composers, others played *rabab, pakhawaj, daf* and *sarangi.*[50]

Summarizing this evidence, it becomes clear that *dhadhis* were originally professional folk musicians from Rajputana and the Punjab, who specialized in singing war songs and heroic ballads called *karkha* and *bar,* with the accompaniment of *dhadh* and *kingra* (*sarinda?*). "The *dhadhi* women", adds Abu'l Fazl, "chiefly play on the *daf* and the *duhul,* and sing the *dhurpad* and the *sohla* on occasions of nuptial and birthday festivities in a very accomplished manner."[51] Other *dhadhis* played on instruments such as the *rabab* and sarangi, and part of their repertoire must have consisted of religious songs. That they were soloists in their own right is also indicated by the paintings. Thus, the sharp social distinction between *dhadhis* (later on *mirasis*) and *kalawants,* viz. accompanists and soloists, on which Daniel M. Neuman bases his interesting thesis about *The Organization of an Artistic Tradition,* seems to be of a more recent date.[52]

4.5 *A struggle for city life*

Niccolao Manucci refers once more to the 'violin' in his masterly work on Mughal India. This time he writes about Agra and the humiliating conditions in which the old Shah Jahan spent his last years (1657-66) as a prisoner of his son, Emperor Aurangazeb.

> One day while a number of us were present and conversing, he (Shahjahan) sent him (I'tibar Khan) two violins he used, asking for them to be repaired and sent inside again as quickly as possible. The eunuch did not trouble himself about having them repaired; then three days afterwards Shahjahan sent to inquire whether they were mended. At this the eunuch flew into a rage, and, with a vinegary face, sent them off to be repaired. Thus it was only after eight days that they were returned.[53]

Were these 'violins' sarangis or *kamanchas?* When did sarangi players actually migrate to the cities and settle down as professional musicians? To answer these questions we will have to go back in time and try to understand what was happening in the field of music during this period.

Although Abu'l Fazl describes the sarangi, names of sarangi players have been omitted from the list of prominent musicians of Akbar's court. Nor does he mention them as accompanists of female singers and dancers (*kanchanis*), who frequented his court. Instead, he informs us that these enchanting ladies were usually accompanied by the *rabab, pakhawaj* and *tala* (a pair of small cymbals).[54] The *kanchanis* often figure in the Akbar paintings, but nowhere have we been able to recognize a sarangi player. On rare occasions we can distinguish a *ghichak* player as part of the chamber orchestra, and it is known that at least two such musicians were employed at Akbar's court.[58] Like his grandfather, Babur, the Emperor was presumably more in favour of Persian than Indian instruments.[55]

When the English traveller, Peter Mundy, writes about the 'dauncinge wenches' and public women (*manganis*) of Agra in 1632, he does not forget to mention their musicians.

> One that playes on a Tabor or little Drumme [*daf*]. An old woman which doth only singe and clapp her hands keeping a kinde of tyme. A fellow beating on both sides of a Drumme [*pakhawaj* or *duhul*]. . . A woman Clappinge two things like Sawcers of brasse [*tala*], keeping tyme also.[56]

No mention is made of any stringed instrument and it is possible that this adventurous Englishman visited dancing girls who belonged to the lower strata of society. On the other hand, if we take Mundy at his word, it is likely that sarangi players had not yet penetrated the quarters where these women entertained their guests. Yet we have seen that Zafar Khan also talks about Agra at the time of Shah Jahan and makes a convincing reference to the sarangi, although it is not clear in which context it was used.

It is known that Shah Jahan was not only a lover of female beauty but, like his illustrious ancestors, a genuine admirer of the fine arts and a noted instrumentalist himself. Manucci writes that "his usual diversion was to listen to various instruments, to verses and poetry; and he was very fond of musicians . . ."[57] Faquirullah completes the picture when he says:

> At the time when Akbarabad (Agra) became the capital (of the Pathans and Mughals) the melody makers of the time assembled there from all corners of the world. Even the number of ustads was such that had not been seen anywhere else at any time. Most of these hailed from Gwaliar. . .
>
> In spite of this (also because of all this) the language of the country called Hindustan has gained in elegance ten-fold. In *khayal* the compositions in this composite language have been based on the topic of love and love-making.[58]

The attitude of the Mughal nobility to music was apparently so favourable that musicians—presumably including sarangi players—migrated in large numbers to Agra and Delhi to try their luck.

Whereas the majority of instrumentalists serving at Akbar's court were of Persian descent, at the time of Shah Jahan the reverse was true. Most of the instrumentalists described in the *Ragadarpan* played indigenous instruments such as *bin, sarangi* and *pakhawaj,* and no mention is made of *ghichak* players. Obviously, Persian fiddlers were slowly losing the battle with their native rivals, the sarangi players, and soon the *ghichak* would almost completely disappear from the Indian music scene. Hindustani music, on the whole, seems to have experienced a phase of innovation, renaissance and above all 'indianization'. The sarangi, however, was still in a transitional stage, shifting from rural to urban society. Its role in classical music was not yet clearly defined.

The most dramatic development that took place in music in 17th century Delhi was perhaps the rise of *khayal,* which "based on the topic of love and love-making. . .is sung in two lines in *desi* language", the spoken language of the people.[59] With these matter-of-fact words, Faquirullah demonstrates conclusively that this vocal genre had already found its admirers among the urban elite. He adds

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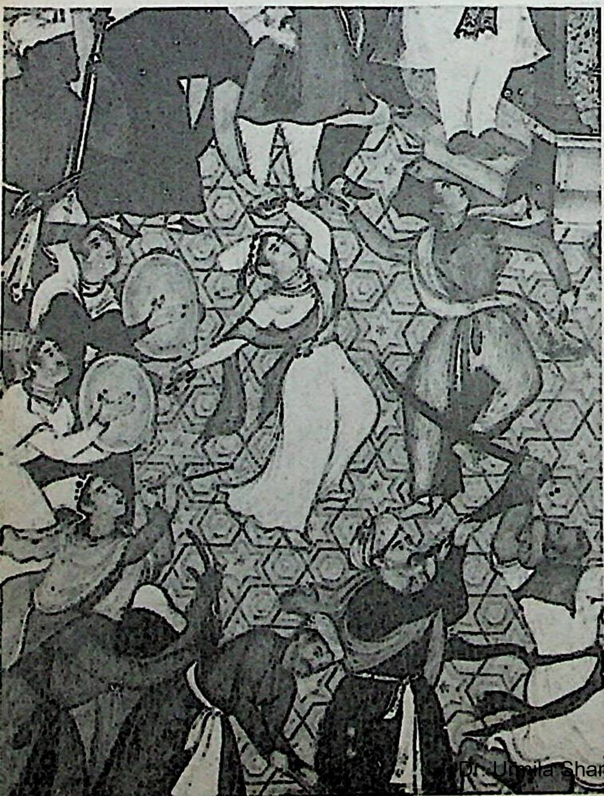

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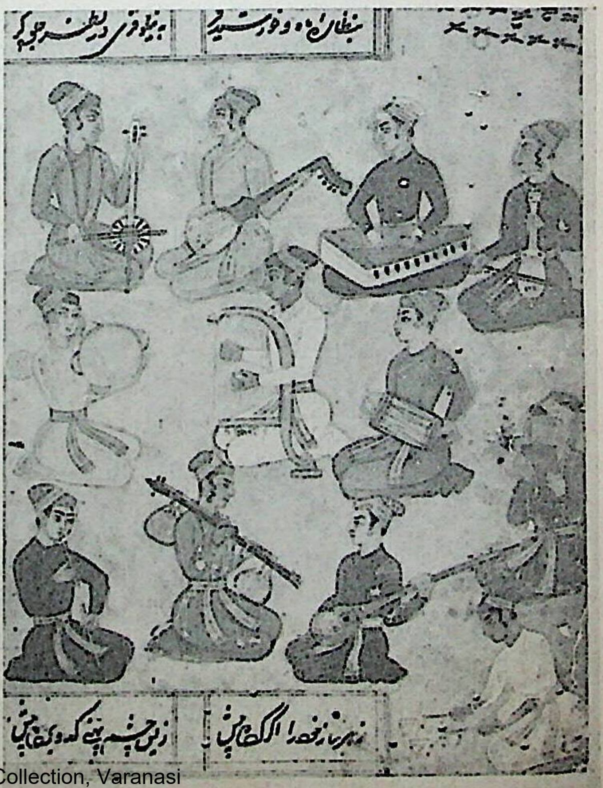


that *khayal* singers preferred the accompaniment of an improved *rabab* which, besides its traditional six gut strings, had another six or twelve strings of copper or iron.[60] Paintings from the period reveal the same. A large, sophisticated *rabab* often figured as the main instrument of a small ensemble, and only in the next century would the sarangi gradually take its place. It is questionable, therefore, whether singers specializing in *khayal* were accompanied by sarangi players at the time of Shah Jahan.[61]

Gradually, *khayal* rose in prominence. "*Khayal* composition of the new type", writes A. Halim, "started during the reign of Bahadur Shah... Niamat Khan, son of Narmul Khan, who assumed the pen-name of Sadarang, composed under royal patronage *khayals, dhrupads* and *horis*... with the assistance of Niazi Qawwal and Lala Bangali before he entered the service of Mohammad Shah (1718-48). During the reign of Mohammad Shah as well, he composed a large number of such songs and set them to tune. It must be remembered that Mohammad Shah himself was an expert musician and his poetic name in his songs was 'Sadarangila' (the ever-gay)."[62]

If we believe what vocalists tell us, Sadarang and Adarang (Firuz Khan) composed numerous *khayals* which they taught to their disciples, mainly women singers who propagated this 'feminine' genre during the 18th century.[63] Fortunately we do not have to rely on the oral tradition alone. From an eye-witness account, *Muraqqa-e-Dihli* (1739), we get a good idea of how music flourished in Delhi, just after the city had been invaded and sacked by Nadir Shah, the ruler of Persia. The author, Dargah Quli Khan Bahadur, gives a vivid description of over fifty musicians, dancers and actors, many of whom served at the court of Mohammad Shah. The foremost among them was Niamat Khan Binkar.

> In Hindustan the presence of Niamat Khan is a blessing from heaven (*niamat*). In the art of creating music and songs, his work is incomparable. Famous courtesans boast of their association with him, and he is a master of presenting delicate *khayals* through music. He is a capable man; he has written works on various subjects in several different languages. But at this time, as music master, he is the leader of all the musicians of Delhi, and he is so proud that, except for the Badshah, he does not concede to anybody's musical request... His singing in various *ragas* and *raginis* has an effect no less than that of magic, and what an amazing skill Niamat Khan has obtained in his *bin* playing...! It can be claimed that never in the world was there born such a magician of a *binkar*, nor is there any hope of one ever being born. When he begins to play the *bin* the notes of the instrument cast magic spells, and the assembly goes into a strange state; people begin to flutter like fish out of water...[64]

The famous ustad had many disciples, of whom Qasim Ali and Pannabai were rated as the best. His brother "has an instrument of three strings which is counted among the wonders of music..." Was he perhaps Khusrau Khan, whom the oral tradition names as the inventor of the Indian *sitar*?[65]

Dargah Quli Khan also describes a number of vocalists who were noted for singing *khayal*, but he does not waste words connecting this genre to Niamat Khan or his disciples. Was the *khayal raga* he talks about an innovation of Niamat Khan? Was it *dhrupad* that incorporated elements of contemporary *khayal*, and became later known as Sadarang *khayal?* According to Inayat Khan 'Rasikh' (1734/35), Niamat Khan was also a great *dhrupad*, *khayal* and *tarana* singer, who composed *khayals* with a high degree of perfection, and Pandit D. C. Vedi has often explained and demonstrated that there is little difference between 'classical' *khayals* composed by Sadarang, and old *dhrupad* compositions.[66]

It is hardly surprising that the author of *Muraqqa-e-Dihli* makes no mention of 'Miyan Sarang' as the 'inventor' of the sarangi. But he does describe Ghulam Mohammad, a renowned sarangi maestro, who was known far and wide.

> He is a master of melody and has specialized in playing sad and serious *ragas* with deep feeling. Not a single musician can play sarangi like him, so profound is his training. His fingernails move gently and effortlessly along the sarangi strings. He casts magic on every musical sitting he attends. All musicians and listeners of Delhi agree that he has no equal. Everybody respects him; he is a very modest and unpretentious man who likes everyone. . .[67]

4.6 *The second fiddle*

Around the turn of the 18th century, a few Sanskrit authors also began to take an interest in the sarangi and other contemporary bowed instruments. Ahobala, writing about the *pinaki vina*, obviously refers to several types of instruments.

> The *pinaki* is half the length of the other *vinas*. It is played with a bow (*dhanush*) made from the hair of a horse-tail. The strings are made of silk. The womb is made of either a coconut shell, wood or bronze. The sides of the left hand fingers touch [the strings of] the instrument. The bow is manipulated according to the syllables.[68]

Although the *Sangitaparijata* does not mention the sarangi, it is evident that the author intends to portray bowed instruments, including the sarangi. The use of the term *'garbha'* (womb) to indicate only a cup or gourd resonator seems unlikely. From the description of its length, in particular, it is doubtful that the old *pinaki* is being described. The length is said to be half the size of the usual *vina*, a feature common to most Indian lutes. Nor is the characteristic bow shape of the original *pinaki* mentioned.

More significant, however, is Ahobala's remark about using "the sides of the fingers." Here he refers unmistakably to the characteristic left-hand technique of the sarangi and *ravanahasta*. And when he adds that "the bow is manipulated according to the syllables", he seems to emphasize its role in vocal accompaniment. Still, we can question whether it was the voice of the fiddler himself or that of other singers he accompanied.

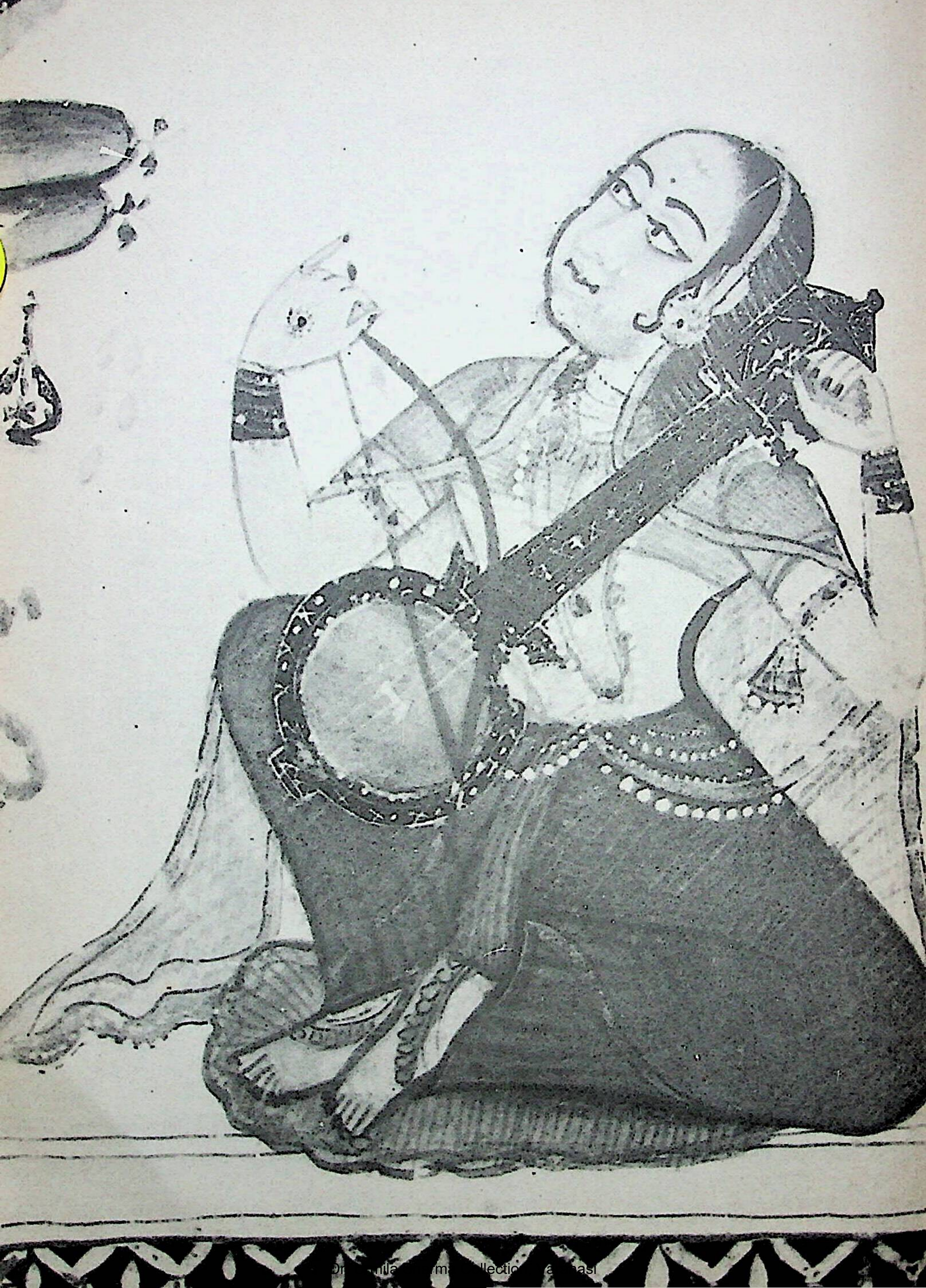
Why does Ahobala avoid using the terms *sarangi* or *ravanahasta* and try to mislead us, when he obviously describes these instruments? It is a marked tendency of Sanskrit authors to refer to ancient practices and retain obsolete terms, even when the meaning has changed. In this particular case, Ahobala prefers to use the term *pinaki* because it had the status of an ancient *vina*, whilst the sarangi did not. The sarangi originated as a humble instrument of the common man, and since it was played mainly by Muslim musicians, it was not worthy of mention by a pandit like Ahobala. While describing the *rabab* he goes one step further and simply devises a new name, probably because he could not find an appropriate ancient one. He calls it *ravavaha* (lit. that which carries sound). The similarity between the words *rabab* and *ravavaha* is indeed a praiseworthy example of his inventive genius.[69]

It is not known where Ahobala composed his important treatise. That sarangi players had already dispersed southwards and eastwards is demonstrated by various sources. A manuscript of Zuhuri's *Sakinamah* from the Deccan, dated 1685, contains a unique illustration figuring twelve musicians who play a variety of Persian and Indian instruments, including a sarangi.[70][59] Zuhuri was one of the greatest poets of the time and spent the last years of his life in Bijapur, at the court of Sultan Ibrahim Adil Shah II (1580-1625). Although he lists a number of instruments, the sarangi is excluded.[71] Again, this suggests that only in the second half of the 17th century (when this manuscript was completed) did the sarangi become recognized as a stringed instrument used in Hindustani classical music.

The process of acceptance and adaptation did not happen overnight, and, even in the 18th century, most musicologists ignored the sarangi. A notable exception was Kaviratna Purushottama Mishra (c. 1690-1750), who wrote the *Sangitanarayana* on behalf of an Orissan king, Gajapati Narayana Deva, the ruler of the Khemundi kingdom.[72] Since he is the first and only Sanskrit author to raise this instrument to the status of a *vina*, discussing it in detail (only six instruments are described), we may assume that he, or his patron, had a special liking for the sarangi.

> This instrument can be made of blackwood, jackwood or *sal*-wood.[73] It is three spans in length. The head is 15 *angulas* [in length], in the shape of a cobra's hood, with the stringholder in the centre. It becomes gradually narrower in the throat region, after which comes a protrusion. Below this is the neck which is 17 [or 10] *angulas* long. It is larger at the base and tapers down towards the end, and is more or less rounded. The interior portion of the head in the front, and the back side of the neck and chest are hollow. The pegbox of the sarangi is rectangular. It is 6 *angulas* long by 4 *angulas* wide, hollow, and 4 *angulas* deep. In three holes are placed the three pegs. The upper end is decorated by a topknot like a demigod.
>
> The head is covered with skin, like the *kacchapi vina* [*rabab*]. On the skin table rests the bridge, which is the size of a thumb with three notches [for the strings]. On the tip of the stringholder there is a bud to which the end-pin is attached. The three strings are arranged in due order [of thickness] and made from silk thread. The bow (*dhanush*) is made from a strip of bamboo, 30 *angulas* long. The strings of the bow are made from horsehair, which is rubbed with resin from the sandal tree. The strings are played with a bow. The sarangi should be played according to instruction from experts.[74]

Nearly every part of the sarangi is minutely described, and measurements are given. Yet it is not easy to imagine exactly what it looked like. Probably it resembled a present-day *chikara*, because the author says that the 'head' (i.e. resonator or what we call 'belly') is shaped like a cobra's hood. The *chikara* is related to the *rabab*, and the instrument in question still had the crescent-shaped protrusion between the neck and resonator (he calls it 'ears'), so characteristic of lutes belonging to this family. This 'collar' can also be recognized in a painting from Bundi, where a girl appears to tune a bowed instrument which has now become obsolete.[60]



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Purushottama Mishra's terminology deserves further attention. His sarangi has a head, a throat, ears, a neck and a chest. It is almost like the bust of a human being, and it must have been quite common to conceive of a sarangi in this way. There is a *chikara* in my possession, whose resonator is carved in the shape of a smiling face, probably that of Bhairava.[61] If one thinks about it, there is a deep logic behind this analogy with the human body. It is the head and the throat which produce sound . . . not the belly! This is the reason why musicians also talk about the voice of the sarangi, and why they always say: "There is no instrument which can reproduce the human voice better than the sarangi."

No instrument was more suited to echo the emotional songs "of love and love-making" than the sarangi. A witness to this in the east of India was John Burnell, travelling through Bengal in 1712. But what a poor understanding he had of the music he heard:

> Cojey Surratt [Khwaja Israil Sarhad], a merchant . . . resident in Calcutta, paid us a visit in the aforesaid willock and brought with him his musick consisting of a Georgian violin, two small kettle drums and the like number of hautboys with which he entertained us. The instruments were costly and of curious workmanship. To the violin the drums were added in concert, assisted with the voice of the musicians [sic], whose ill tun'd notes and imperfect cadence made most lamentable discord.[75]

The Dutchman J. S. Stavorinus, travelling in Bengal between 1768-71, also noted "an instrument resembling a violin", which was used to accompany the singing

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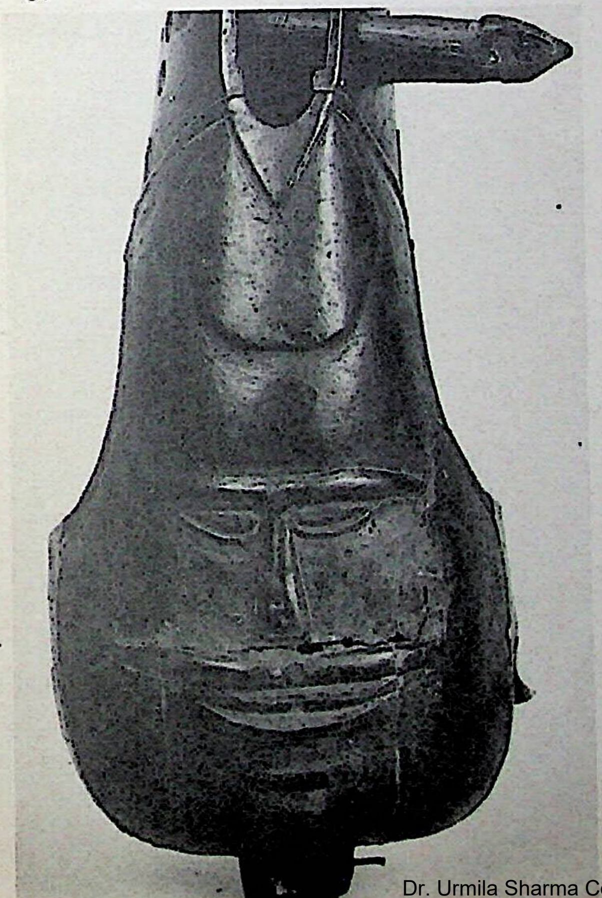

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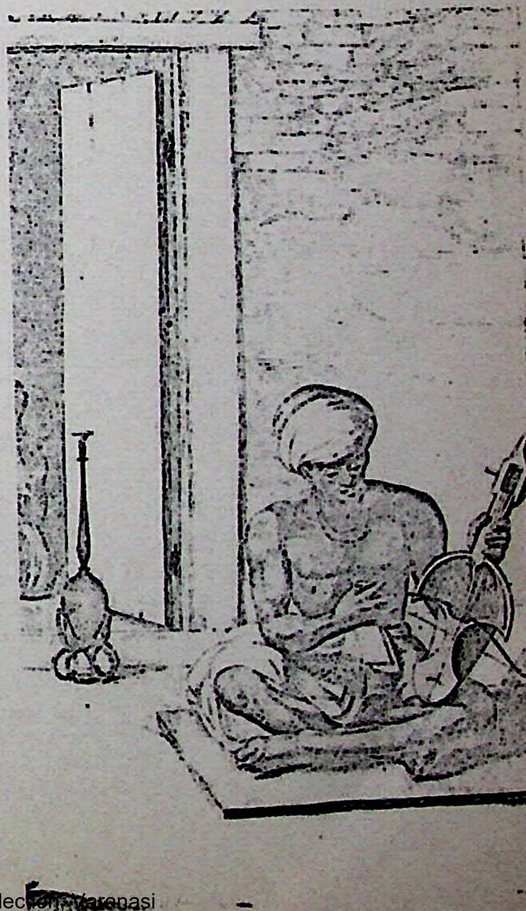


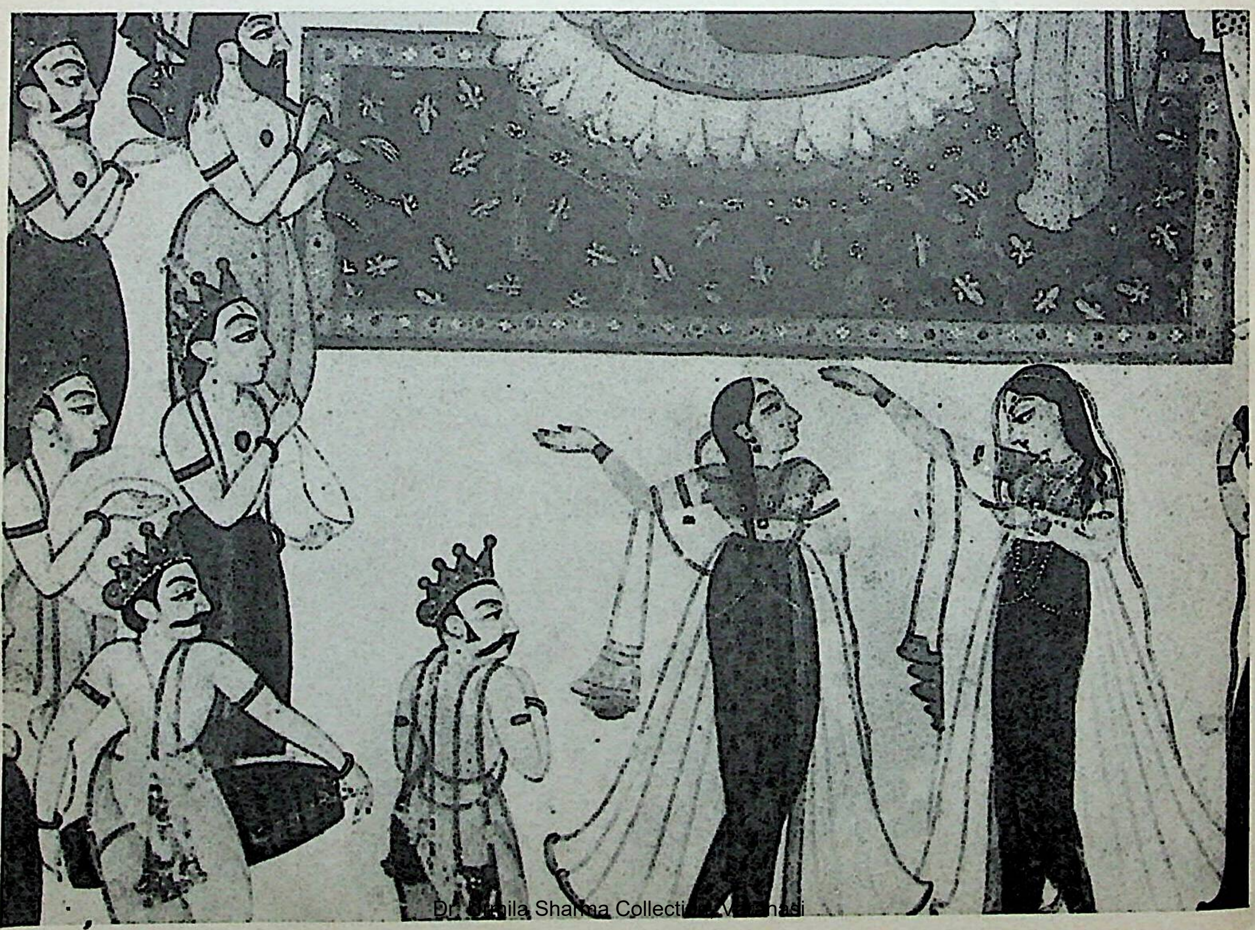
girls.[76] Most probably it was a sarangi because, as we will see, the sarangi had become the favourite instrument of women singers.

It seems that sarangi players, who had settled in the cities, soon discovered that it was virtually impossible to compete with *rabab* and *tanbur* players, let alone with the aristocratic *binkars*. They must have realized that, in order to make a reasonable living, the only solution was to associate with courtesans. As singing and echoing their own songs on the sarangi had for centuries been the main occupation of these bards, it was not difficult for them to accompany the songs of female vocalists. These women must have welcomed the wistful sound of the sarangi, which blended so well with their voices, and gave them support and inspiration.

Through their association with famous courtesans, sarangi players were able to participate in musical sittings and enter the courts. In this way, they began to be known in the world of classical music, and the move from rural to urban society was complete. Sarangi players, however, did not have the status of vocalists nor instrumentalists; they did not belong to the category of solo performers and were relegated to a subordinate position. By accepting the status of accompanists, their role as background musicians, playing second fiddle, seemed once and forever defined.

4.7 *Amriti*

The 'Bengal violin' (*sarinda*) was described and depicted by W. Ouseley at the end of the 18th century.[77] Both in the north-west and north-east of India, it was an



extremely popular instrument, and, in Sind, the magical *surando* of Bijal was immortalized by the great saint-singer Shah Abdul Latif (1689-1742):

> All three in tune were wed,
> The music's chord, the dagger and the neck.[78]

Engelbert Kaempfer (1651-1716) was probably the first European to depict this instrument in his *Amoenitates Exoticae*. Although he gives most of the current names of Persian instruments, the fiddle is described as "a Pandura of different construction, provided with four strings, which is decidedly exotic; it is held in the same position and also played with a bow. Its neck is narrow and short, its belly double, more oblong, fuller and open in the upper part, smaller in the lower, and covered . . ."[79]

According to F. Baltazard Solvyns, the Bengali *sarinda* "belongs almost exclusively to the poor: in so much, that most of the common people, particularly the palanquin bearers, have one of them of their own making: this does not require much genius, being no more than a bit of wood hollowed out, over which are stretched some chords of spun cotton: and the sound is produced by drawing over them a bow, as represented in the print. The music is proportioned to the rudeness of the instrument, and can be pleasing only to its Hindoo inventors. Few of those who play upon the *sarinda* have any knowledge of music; they merely follow their fancy, continuing sometimes in a lower tone with deep expression, at others rising suddenly from the lowest to the highest notes in reiterated cadences, but always without taste, measure or harmony."[80] [62, 63] Like most Westerners of the time, Solvyns was prejudiced and could not find much beauty in the music of India (certainly not in the music of the common man or Muslim!). But he took a fancy to their instruments, and, unlike most foreigners, he made a very sincere effort to draw and describe them.

Francois Baltazard Solvyns was a professional painter from Antwerp who arrived in Calcutta in 1791, and stayed there until 1804. "On 6th February 1794, with the encouragement of the orientalist, Sir William Jones, he announced a grandiose scheme for *250 coloured etchings descriptive of the manners, customs, character, dress, and religious* [*ceremonies*] *of the Hindoos* . . . He applied himself to the task with tremendous energy and wandered all over Calcutta drawing men and women of every possible caste and calling . . ."[81] Although the first edition of his ambitious work appeared in 1799,[82] it was only in the later French folio edition that the descriptions were presented. Solvyns' series of 35 etchings of Indian musical instruments is indeed unique. Despite his lack of understanding of the music and his almost childish way of narrating—he was a painter, not a musician or a writer—his descriptions reveal information which is to be found nowhere else, and particularly so in those cases where the instruments have become obsolete.

No less than five 18th century bowed instruments are depicted: the *pinaka, sarangi, sarinda, amriti* and *orni*. The *amriti* seems to have pleased him more than the *sarinda*:

> This is also an instrument with strings; but what renders it more curious, and proves it of Hindoo origin, is that the body of the instrument is made of a cocoa-nut, cut down to about one third, and covered over with a very fine skin. To this species of tymbal is joined a wooden handle with strings stretched from one end of the instrument to the other; there is the whole

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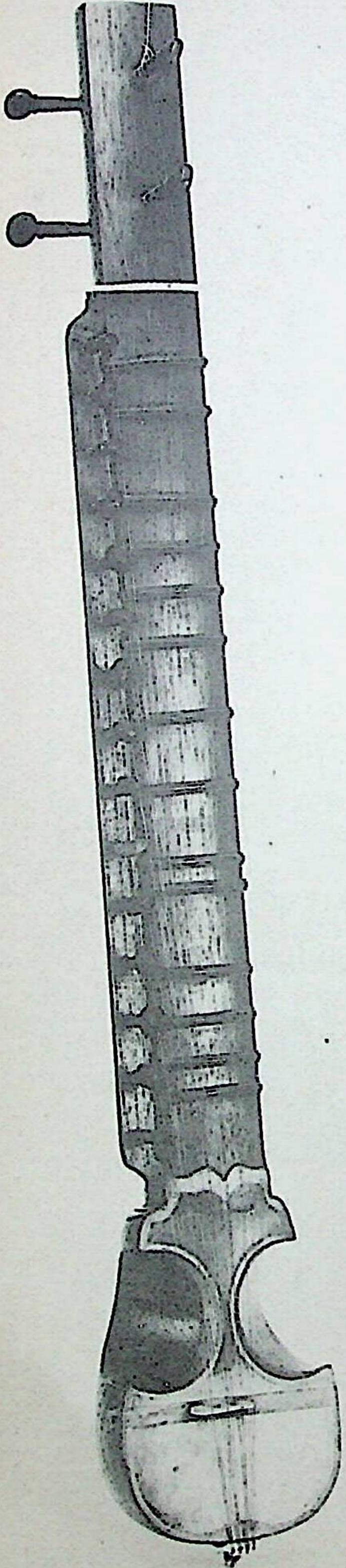

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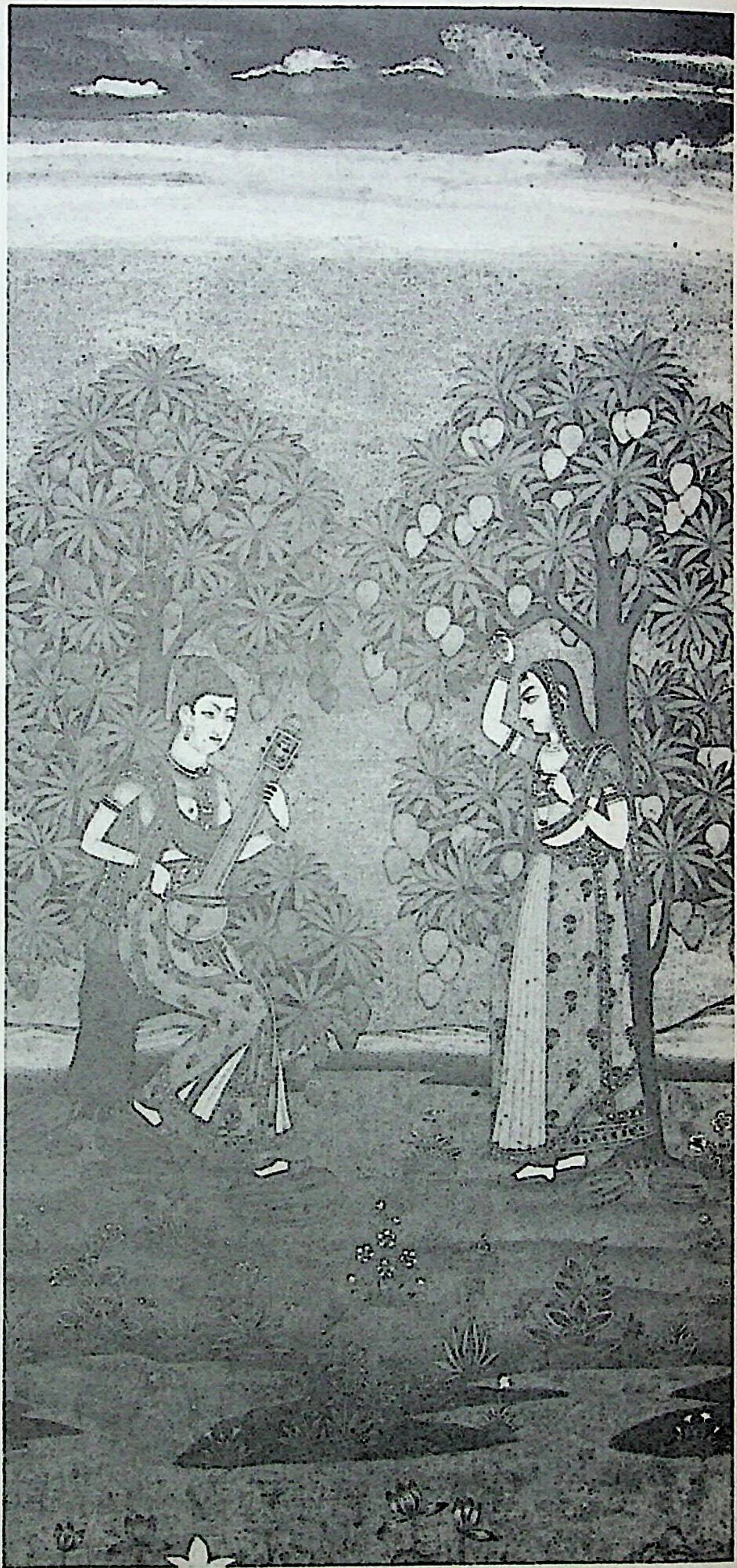

> secret of this truely Hindoo invention. The man who plays it is seated, holds it between his knees, and endeavours to draw musical sounds from the shell of his cocoa-nut. At a distance it would be difficult to form a guess at what he is about, and still harder to conceive that it is an amusement. The sound of the *omerti* is not unlike that of the *sarinda* and the *saringee,* but something sweeter and less grating to the ear of an European. One is not a little surprised to hear a tolerably harmonious music from a cocoa-shell.
>
> The praise which I heard a skilful Brahmun bestow on a concert of *omertis* of different sizes, made me curious to assemble one in order to judge of the truth of his assertions; the more so, as the Brahmun himself was really an excellent performer, and I imagined that a reunion of several such as he, might have rather a fine effect: but this instrument being very rare, I could with difficulty find but three, and those very indifferent and far inferior to him; so that my hope was deceived.
>
> This instrument is unknown to many Hindoos, though some among the higher classes, play on it for their amusement.[83][viii]

Soon after that the instrument must have vanished. The last we hear about it is from Raja S. M. Tagore (1877): "*Amrita,* a very ancient stringed instrument played with a bow. In appearance, resembles the *rabana* . . ."[84] But Tagore does not provide any details, and it is doubtful if he ever saw any such instrument. It is also questionable whether the *amriti* or *amrita* was really "a very ancient instrument." Medieval music

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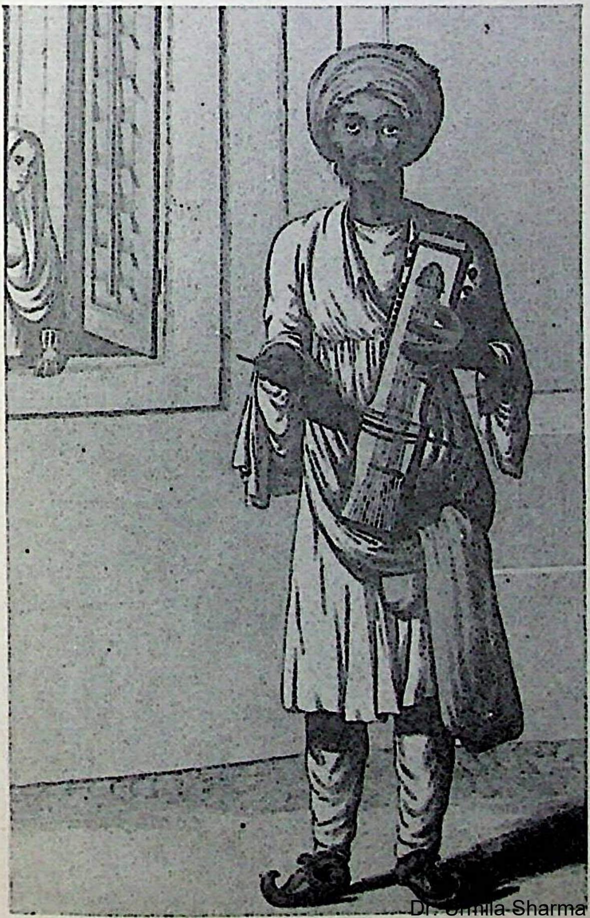

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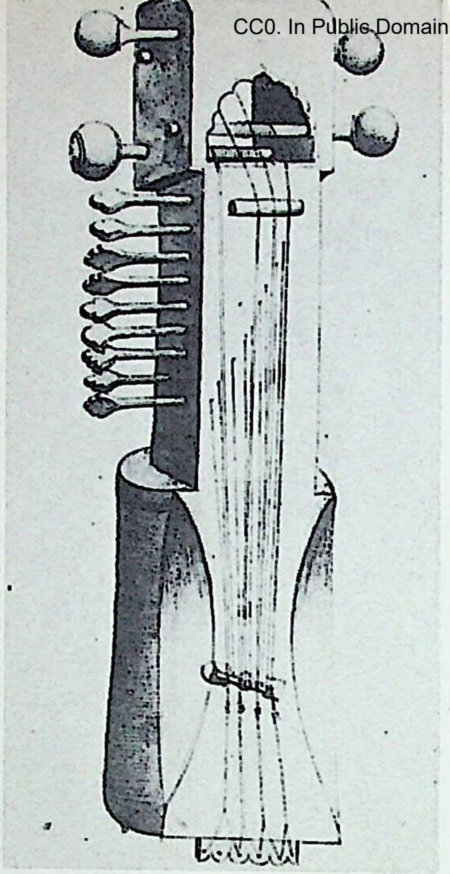

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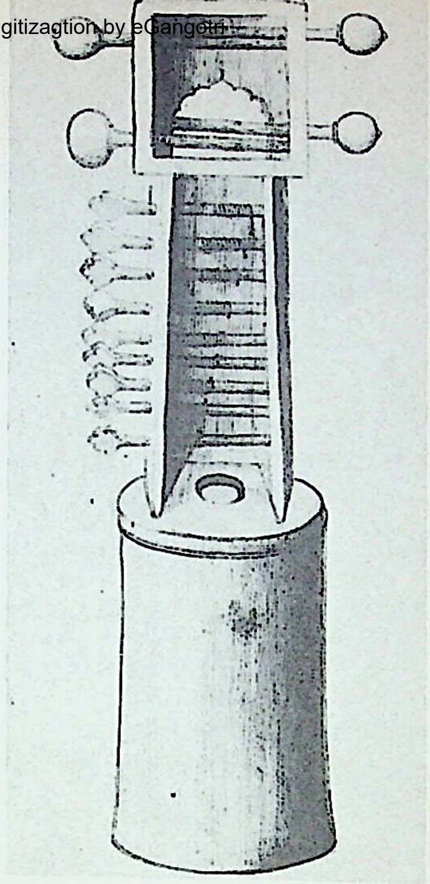

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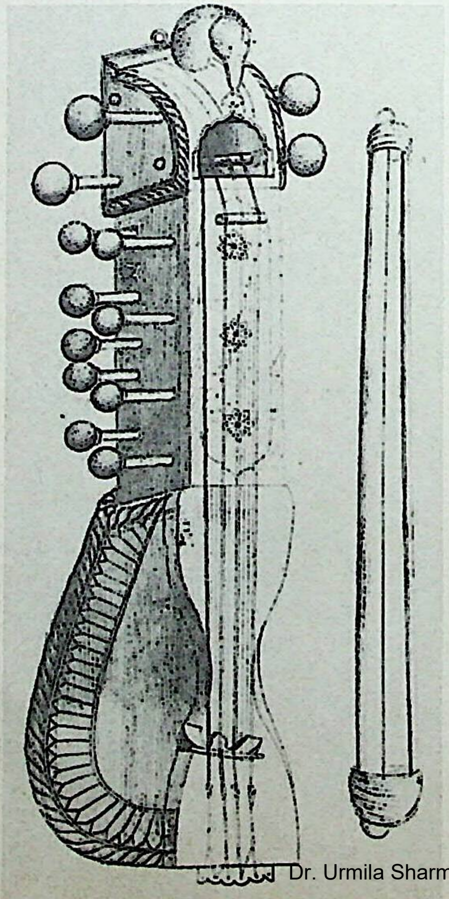

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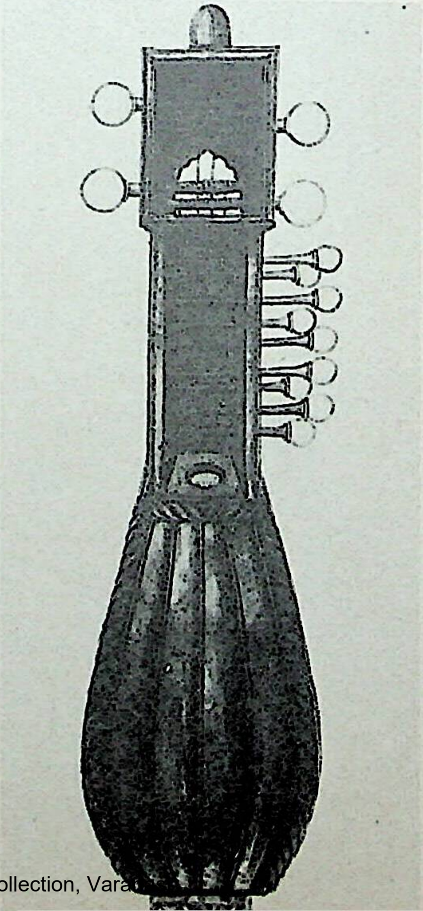
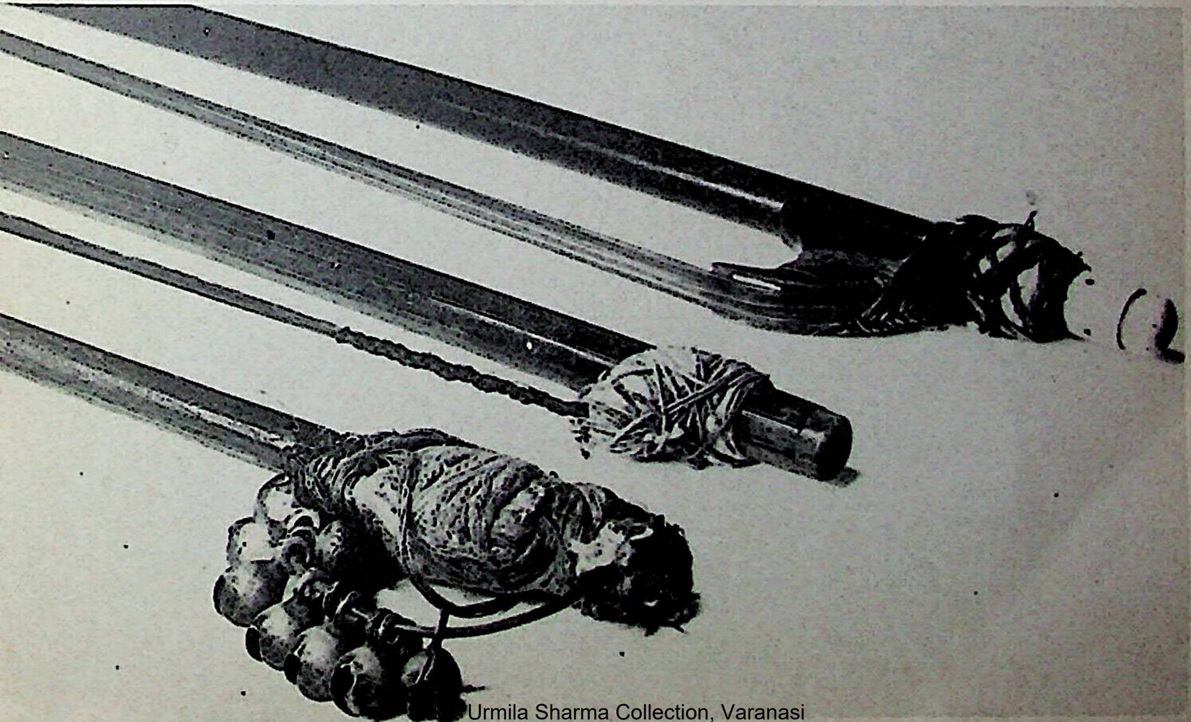


treatises do not mention it, but Abu'l Fazl and Faquirullah give a brief description. According to them, it was shorter than the *sur bin* and had one small gourd attached to the upper end of the stick. There was only one steel string and unlike the *kingra*, it lacked frets.[85] Nothing has been said about the right-hand techniqùe, but, even if it was bowed, it must have been quite different from the *amriti* which Solvyns has drawn. Yet the comparison between *amriti* and *kingra* (which Faquirullah makes) arouses our interest, the more so since Solvyns' *omerti* resembles the *kingri* shown in illustration 41 and the *ravanastron* depicted by Sonnerat.[40]

The most distinctive features of these instruments are their relatively long, broad neck, and the rectangular pegbox with four lateral pegs. A very similar four-stringed instrument is depicted in a number of 18th century paintings, notably those from the Deccan, illustrating *ragini* Sarang.[64] Was the *amriti* perhaps the ancestor of the *esraj*, "a modern instrument formed out of the *seetar* and sarangi?"[86] [65] The idea of a long, broad neck has been retained here, and an old *esraj* in my possession has a rectangular pegbox which is characteristic of almost all instruments belonging to the sarangi family.

4.8 *Evolution of the sarangi*

"This instrument, which is frequently met with in every part of Hindoostan, is very like the violon-cello, though it is smaller and has more chords," writes Baltazard Solvyns. "The sounds which it produces are soft and melodious, and susceptible of greater variety than those of the other instruments. Of all the different kinds of Hindoo music in general, the *saringee* comes nearest to that of Europe. The chords are of spun cotton; the pieces of wood [sic] which form the instrument are united by a very fine white skin glued over the joints. The sweet sounds of the *saringee* are well adapted to accompany the voice; it is used in all the dances both of men and women."[87] His etching depicts a more or less rectangular sarangi with a number of sympathetic strings.[66] Much better, however, are the drawings which were probably made by an Indian artist working under the supervision of a Dutchman, Robert Nichols Brouncker, residing in Murshidabad between 1785-90.[88] [68-71] Two different



types of sarangis are shown, in front and back profile. The artist has left nothing to the imagination. All the parts are clearly identifiable, and one can even see how the strings are tied to the pegs. Noteworthy is the oblique position of the bridge[89] (with its right foot touching the wooden edge of the belly as is the case in many folk sarangis), and the absence of a nut in the bow. Captain N. A. Willard, the reputed author of *A Treatise on the Music of Hindoostan* (1834), confirms the latter when he talks about the sarangi bow, "the hairs of which are loose, and tightened with the hand at the time of playing."[90] Most folk sarangi players still handle the bow in this way. The wooden nut was probably introduced during the 19th century, when sarangi players and makers learnt about the structure of the violin bow.[72]

Both the sarangis in Brouncker's drawings have four big pegs, but (like the present-day classical sarangi) only three main strings pass over the nut; the fourth serves either as a bourdon or resonance string. In addition, there are nine sympathetic strings attached to two rows of small pegs, which are inserted in the neck. According to Willard:

> [the sarangi] is strung with four gut strings . . . The two lowest strings are tuned to *khuruj*, and the others to a perfect fourth . . .
>
> Besides the gut-strings, the instrument has a number of metal wires, generally thirteen, of unequal lengths, which go under the gut-strings. These wires are tuned to the mode proper of the *raginee* intended to be played. The bow can never touch or approach them, so they are of use only to reverberate with the sound of the gut-strings.[91]

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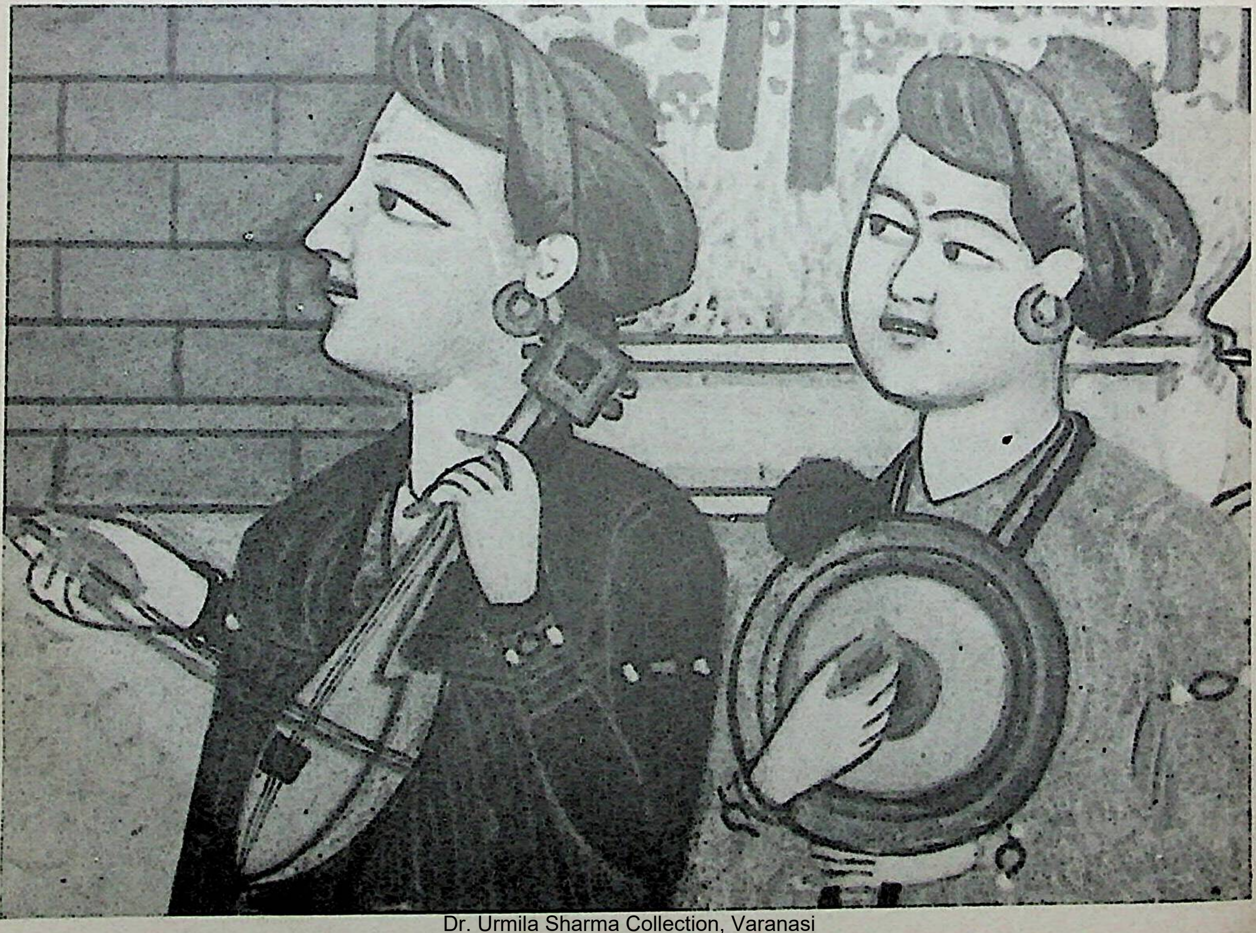

If what Willard writes is correct, the fourth gut string (tuned to *kharaj*) would serve as a bourdon, and the main strings of the sarangi would be tuned thus: key-note, key-note, fourth, fourth (*Ṣ Ṣ M M*). It is doubtful, however, if this was really the case. In folk sarangis, the bourdon or drone string is always in unison with the first string, tuned to the highest pitch. This 'pair' is tuned to the tonic, while the lower two strings are tuned a fourth and an octave below the tonic, thus *Ṣ P̣ S S.*[92]

Although Indian paintings and drawings of the 18th century reveal a great variety of sarangis, those with a pear-shaped (*chikara* group) and a rectangular body (*sarangi* group), waisted in the front, were most commonly used by musicians accompanying singers and dancers.[73, 67] A 'chikara' was described in the *Sangitanarayana,* and it was also alluded to in the *A'in-i Akbari.* Because of its close resemblance to the *rabab,* Curt Sachs speculates that this type is more original.[93] Whether this is true or not, it seems that sarangis with a waisted, box-shaped resonator, such as the one played by Ghulam Hussain of Jaipur, became gradually more prominent during the latter part of the 18th century.[xvi] The drawings of Solvyns and Brouncker also show such instruments, and the sarangi with a belly in the shape of a half-cylinder would (or had already) become the standard type. It has been described and illustrated by several 19th century authors, and can be found in many instrument collections, although the number of resonance strings may vary.[74] As noted before, there is little difference between this small 'classical' sarangi (the grandfather of the large sarangi) and the Jogia sarangi of Rajasthan.[75]

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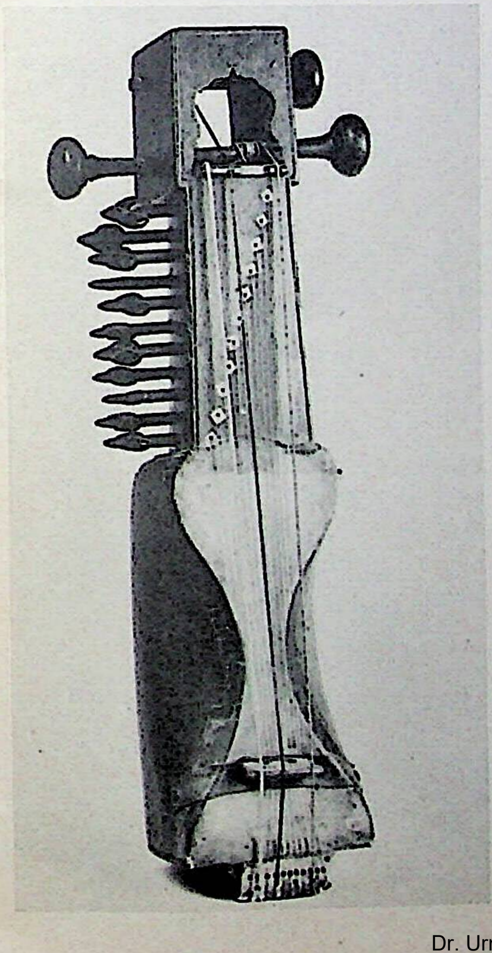

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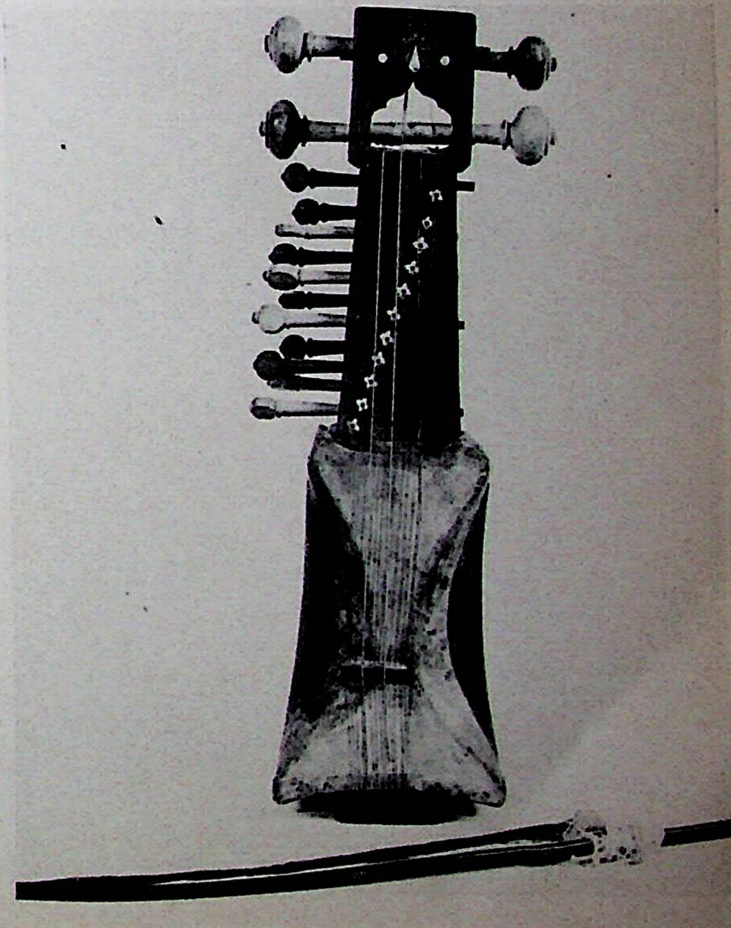

Captain Meadows Taylor (1864), describing the collection of Indian musical instruments presented by Colonel P. T. French to the Royal Irish Academy, writes:

> The *sarungi* has four strings of catgut; it is played with a bow; and the execution upon it by accomplished performers is frequently striking and pleasing, while the tones are nearer perhaps in quality to the human voice than those of any other instrument with which I am acquainted. Considering its small size and rude shape, the tone is much more sweet and powerful than would be conceived from its appearance . . .
>
> The *sarungi* is used by Mahomedan musicians more than by Hindu; and I imagine it may have been introduced into India by the Mahomedans, possibly from Persia. It forms an excellent accompaniment to the voice; and an old friend of mine, an excellent musician and violin player, the late Captain Giberne, Bombay Army, used to prefer one of these instruments to his own violin for concerted pieces in which the violin took a soprano part.[94]

Captain Giberne must have been one of the first foreigners who "used to prefer one of these instruments to his own violin." It would take another century before the sarangi found a wider appeal in the West, and a few Westerners traded their violin for a sarangi!

As opposed to Meadows Taylor, B. H. Baden Powell (1872) found "the sound of this instrument . . . very harsh and disagreeable", but C. R. Day did not concur: "The tone of the sarangi more nearly resembles that of the viola than any European instrument, and when well played there is a charm about the instrument

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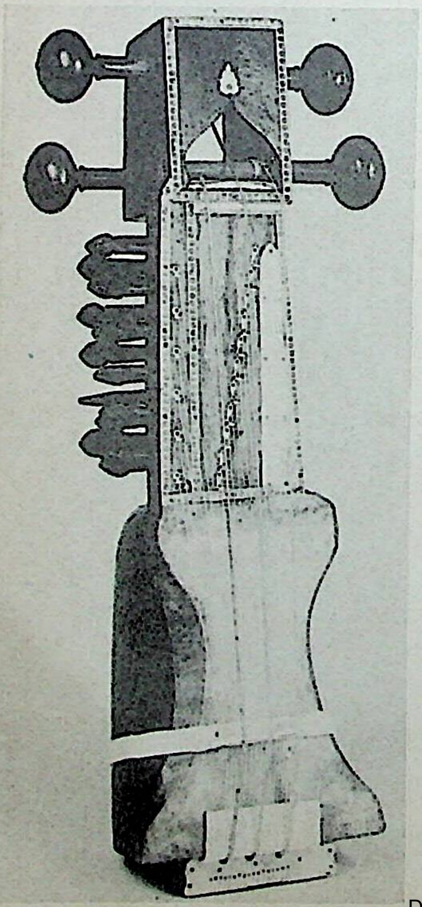

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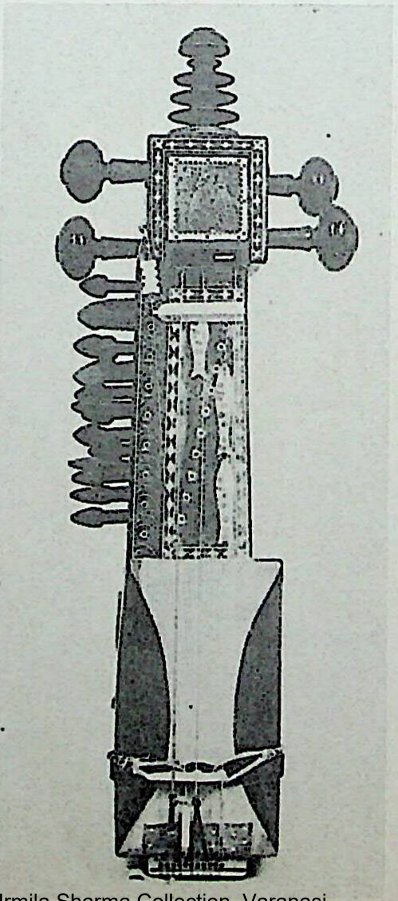

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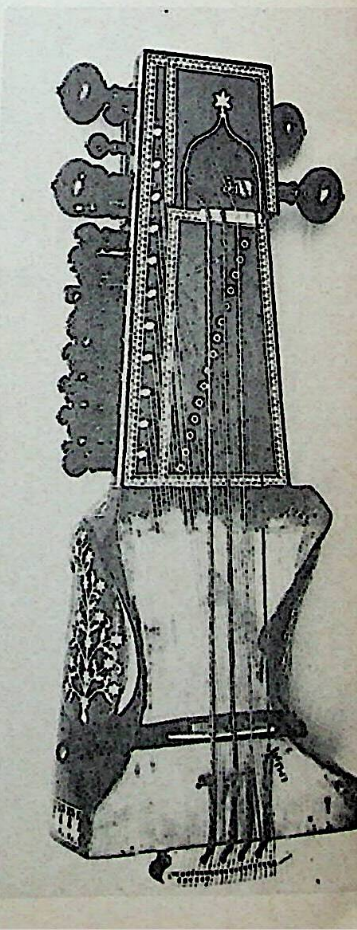

that is not easily forgotten."[95] Thus, opinions about the tonal quality differed, but the instruments described were virtually the same as those depicted by the Murshidabad artist. All 19th century writers, including F. J. Fétis (1869) and V. C. Mahillon (1880, 1893), seem to agree that the sarangi was a relatively small, box-shaped instrument with eleven or thirteen sympathetic strings, and none noticed that a larger type of sarangi had emerged.[96] In this instrument, the right side of the neck is broadened to accommodate an additional row of pegs, to which are attached six, nine or eleven resonance strings, running along the right side of the fingerboard. As a result of this extension, the instrument has lost its symmetrical shape, i.e. on the left side the belly has a larger waisting than on the right, where the belly tapers off into the neck.[76-78]

Gradually, artists all over the north began to adopt this 'intermediate' type. Ethel Rosenthal (1928) writes: "The sarangis used were of various sizes, some being about two feet in height, whereas others were considerably larger . . . The larger instruments employed by the accompanists of the dancing girls possessed twenty-two understrings, and the tone produced was rich and mellow."[97] The dancing girls, she informs us, "came specially from Delhi to entertain the Maharaja and his guests." We are a little surprised, however, that the accompanists did not play on even larger sarangis which, according to the musicians I spoke to, had in Delhi already replaced the 'small' and 'intermediate' types.[98][79]

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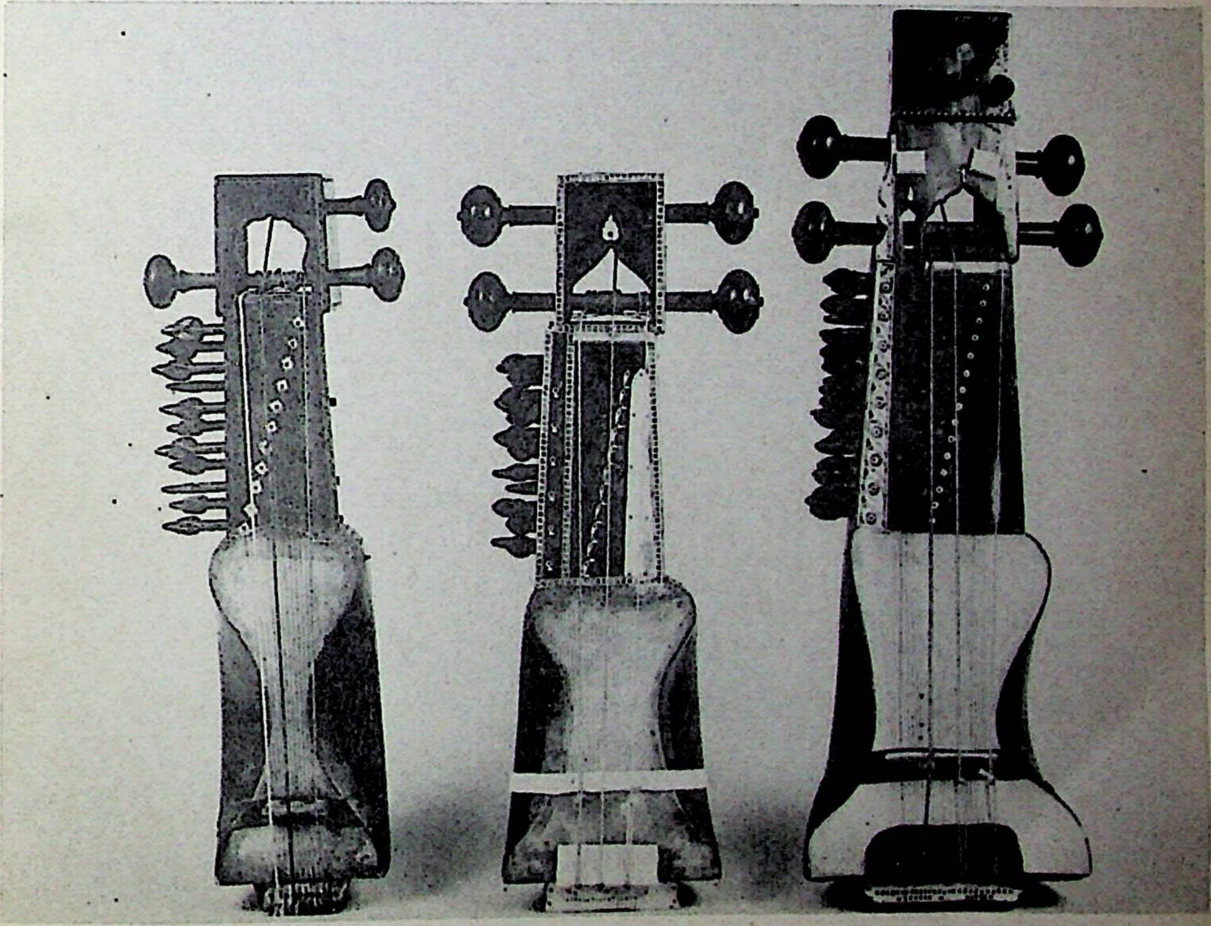
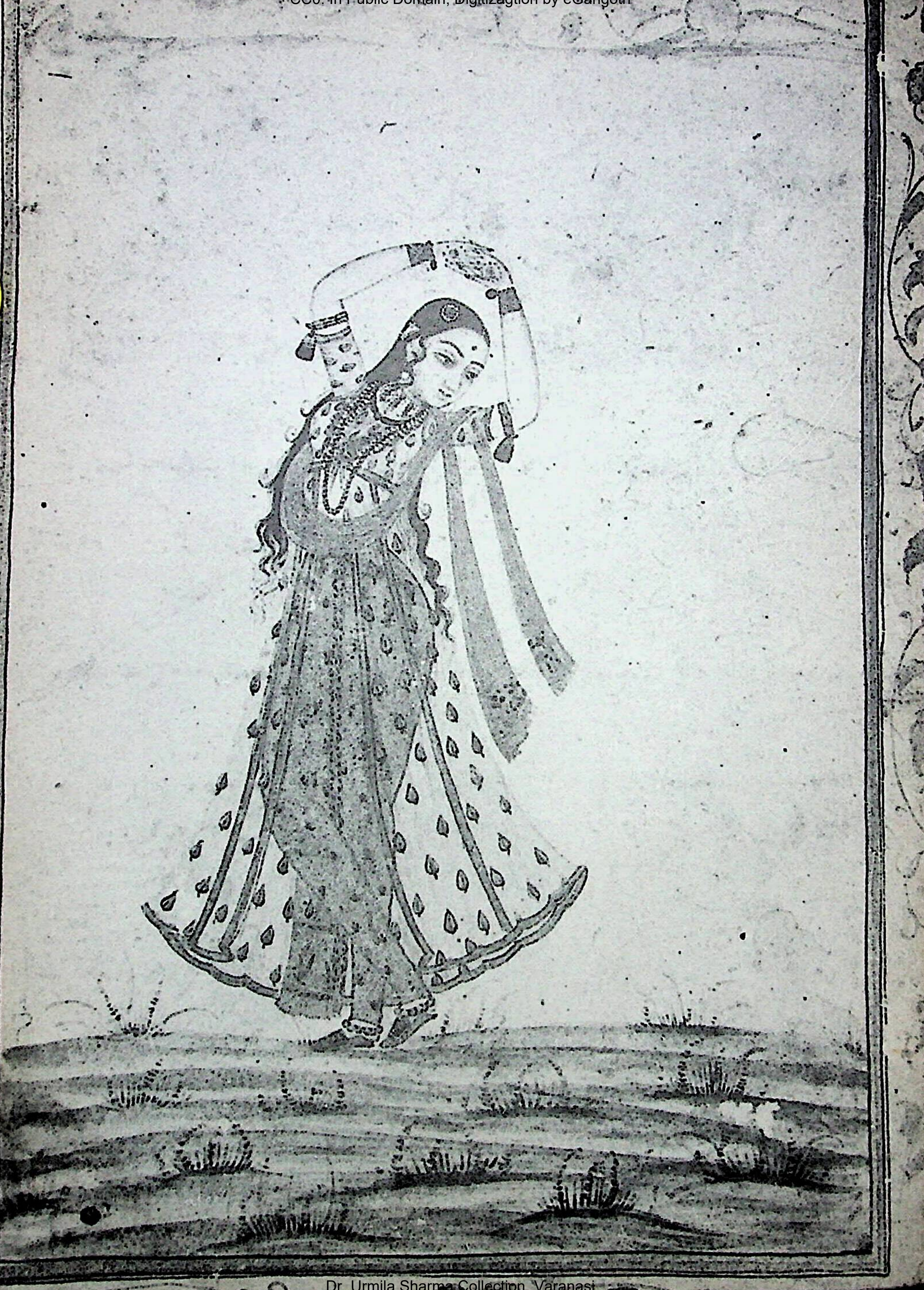




Referring to a fascinating photograph of the 1870's, showing a group of dancing girls with their musicians—four sarangi players and three *tabla* players[xx] —Curt Sachs writes in 1915:

> A surprising version has recently been built in Delhi. It is about one eighth[?] larger and incurved on one side only . . . The most amazing part of it is an army of 39 (!) resonance strings . . ."[99]

Sachs could not foresee that this 'delightful hybrid' (*erfreulicher Bastard*) would become the standard classical sarangi. Besides the right-hand *tarabs*, it is characterized by the addition of a second pegbox above the first one, in which are placed ten or eleven frontal pegs. Attached to these pegs are two sets of sympathetic strings of almost equal length, which run through holes in a second nut and pass over two table-like (*jivari*) bridges, placed on the instrument between the two nuts.

The 'modern' classical sarangi probably developed in or around Delhi, approximately 135 years ago, when the evolution of sarangi playing was entering a new phase. Apparently, it took some time to become popular in the eastern part of Uttar Pradesh, where one can still find sarangis with a second pegbox built on top of an older instrument where it was originally lacking, instead of being an integral part of the instrument, as it is today.[100]

4.9 *Courtesans*

Baltazard Solvyns does not conceal the fact that many sarangi players were associated with disreputable dancing girls and prostitutes, and that their status was not very high. He writes: "The *loutchias* too are the most frequent performers on this instrument; for which reason in the back-ground of the print I have represented a house of bad fame, and a woman of the vilest class, because such is the general resort of the *loutchias*, where they give themselves up to every excess of debauchery . . ."[101] [66]

In this connection, Captain N. A. Willard remarks that the *tabla*, "less solemn than the *mridung*, and more adapted to accompany light and trivial compositions, is selected as the fittest counterpart with the *sarungee* to the silver tones of the modern meretricious Hindoo dancing girl. It is from hence evident, that the two last are modern licentious inventions, unknown to the ages when music breathed sacred and solemn numbers."[102] [80]

Captain C. R. Day (1891) also observes that, "curiously enough, as was the case with the violin in England at one time, the instrument [sarangi] is considered to be rather vulgar, and hence musicians, though they admire and like it much, will usually employ either a low caste Hindu or a Mussulman to play it."[103]

It is curious indeed, but this was (and still is) the main reason why most Indians had little respect for the instrument, and had so little to say about it. The peculiar schizophrenic attitude to courtesans, their accompanists, and to musicians, in general, which so many Western authors mention, was probably a new phenomenon at that time. We will see that the European colonialists were greatly responsible for it.

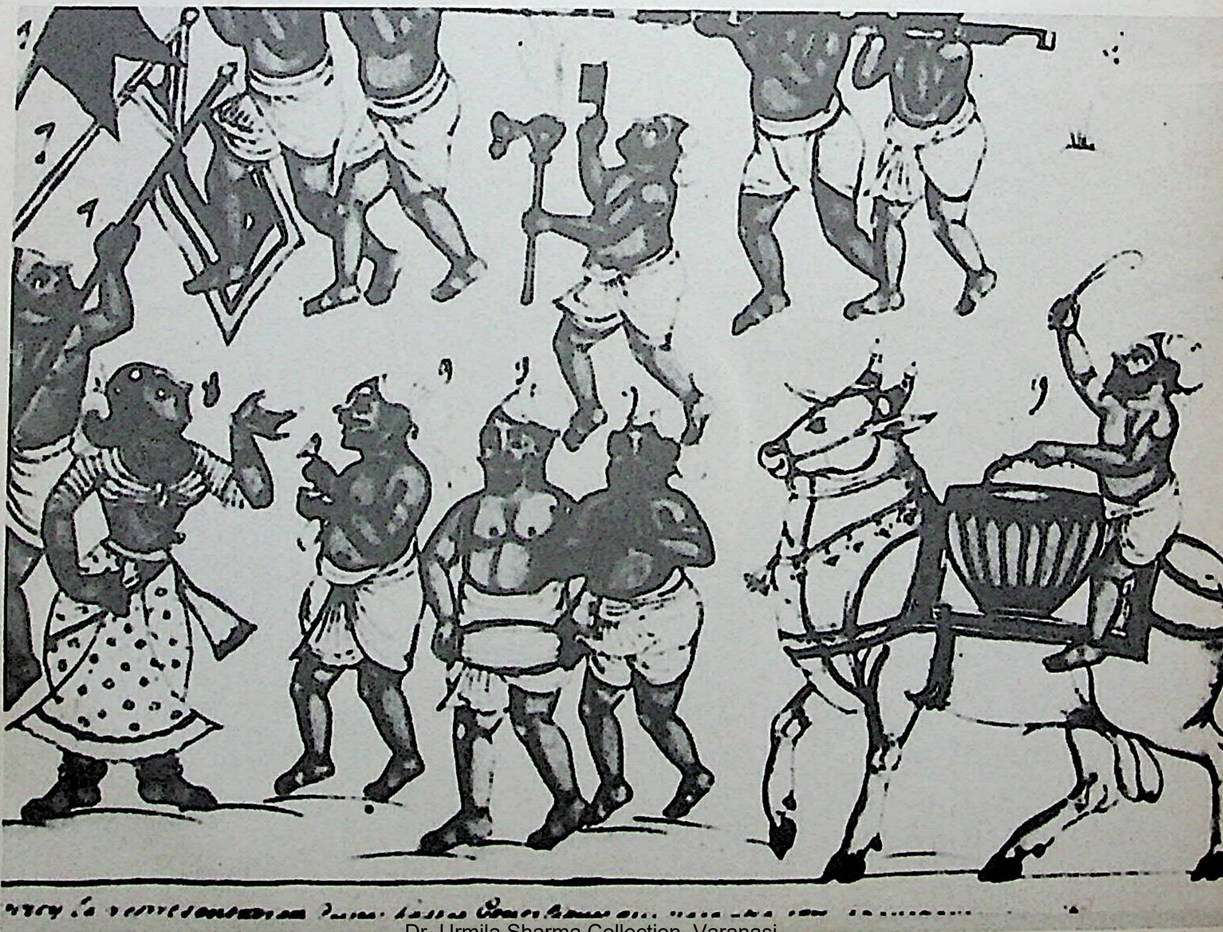
The term 'dancing girl', as female singers and dancers were usually referred to by Europeans, naturally included all kinds of professional entertainers, ranging from vulgar bazaar prostitutes to dedicated and talented songstresses. Peter Mundy (1632), for instance, explains:

> There are also dauncinge wenches, of whome there are divers sorts, as Lullenees [*loli*], Harcanees [*harakni*], Kenchanees [*kanchani*] and Doomenees [*domni*] (all whoores though not in soe publique a manner) beinge of severall Castes and use different manner of musick. Most comonly they are hired at solemne feasts, where they playe, singe and daunce, whilst they [the guests] eate, drinck and discourse. And there is scarse any meetinge of freinds without them, where, when they are once warme with their meates, drinckes, gullees [*ghola*], etts. . . ., they take whome they have a minde to, either for [the] night or otherwise.[104]

Francisco Pelsaert, also staying in Agra between 1621-27, describes some of their attributes:

> There are many kinds of dancers, among them Lolonis, who are descended from Persian whores who have come from Persia [to India], and sing only in Persian; and a second kind, Dommines, who sing Hindustani songs, which are considered more beautiful, more amorous, and more profound, than those of the Persians, while their tunes are superior; they dance, too, to the rhythm of the songs with a kind of swaying of the body which is not lascivious, but rather modest.[105]

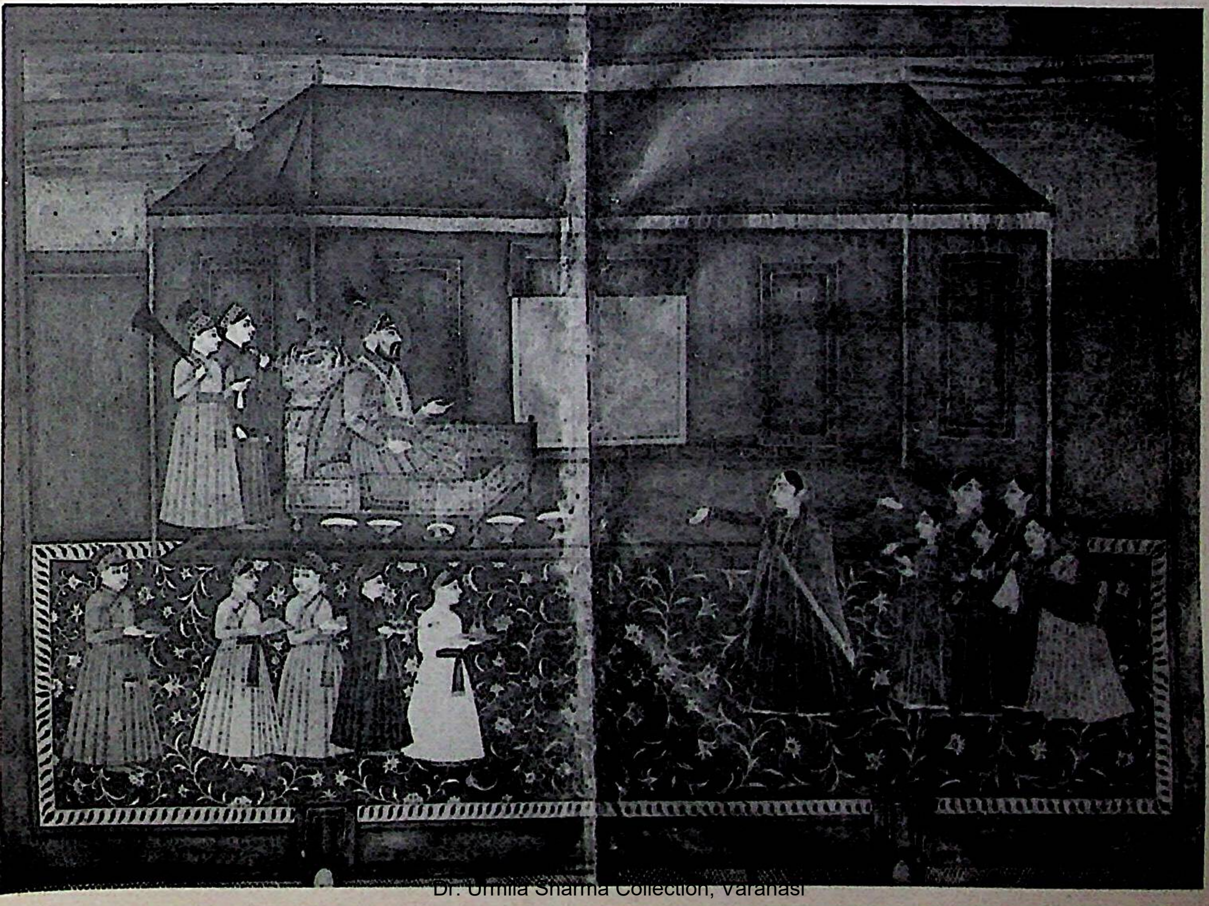
Kanchanis, as their name suggests, were high-class courtesans who were allowed to enter the palace, and it seems that Akbar himself conferred the title upon them.[106]



"This class is more esteemed than others, by reason of their great beauty. When they go to court, to the number of more than five hundred, they all ride in highly embellished vehicles, and are clothed in rich raiment. All of them appear and dance in the royal presence."[107] Manucci further informs us that Shah Jahan "permitted great liberty to public women, of whom the greater numbers were dancers and singers. All of them paid taxes to the king."[81] Another eyewitness, F. Bernier, also comments on Shah Jahan's exorbitant passion for *kenchen* (*kanchanis*), but as a true moralist he disapproves of it.

> But there is one thing which to me seems to be a little too extravagant; which is, that the public women, I mean not those of the Bazar, but those more retired and considerable ones, that go to the great marriages in the houses of the Omrahs and Mansebdars to sing and dance, those that are called Kenchen, as if you would say, the gilded, the blossoming ones, that those, I say, did also enter in the time of Chah-Jehan into the seraglio at such fairs, and there passed even the whole night in singing and dancing. These are not of that sort that prostitute themselves promiscuously to all; and they are most of them handsome and well apparelled, and excellent singers and dancers, after the mode of the country, surprising in the suppleness of their body, and the nimbleness of their motions, yet in the upshot, of the rank of public women . . . Aurang-Zebe is more serious, he suffers them not to come into the seraglio . . . [108]

Aurangazeb (1658-1707), a pious and almost ascetic Muslim, disliked the frivolous and decadent way of life of the Mughal nobility. He tried to curb the activities of public

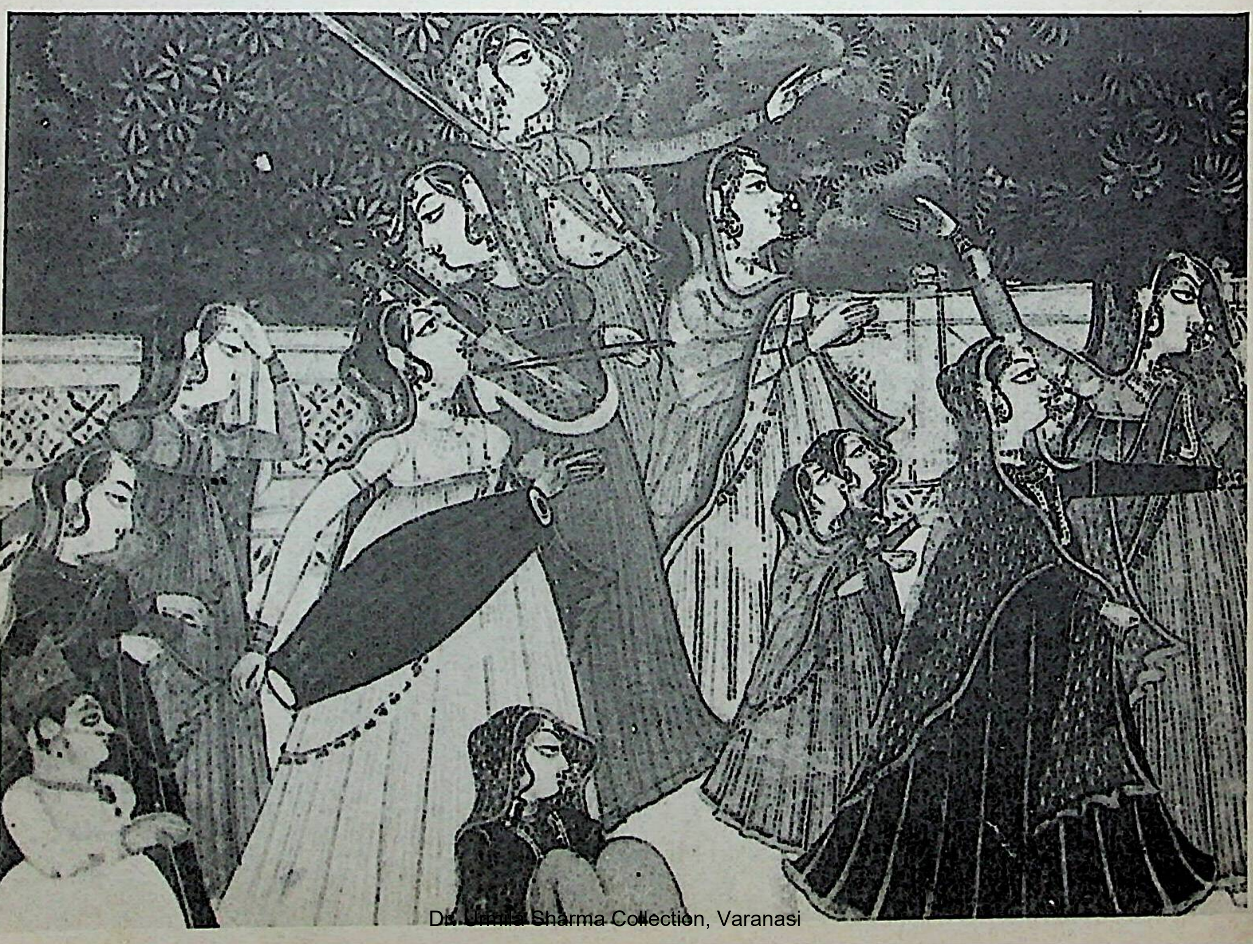


dancers and musicians, but "in spite of Aurangazeb's having forbidden all music, he nevertheless continued always to entertain in his palaces, for the diversion of the queens and his daughters, several dancing and singing women, and even conferred special names on their mistresses or superintendents."[109] They were addressed as '*Bai*' (according to Manucci, it means 'madam' or 'lady') which was appended to their name, as in Hirabai and Kesarbai (lit. Diamond Lady and Saffron Lady).

Aurangazeb's singular effort to bury the music, discredit female dancers and suppress prostitution, seems to have had little effect, however. Jahandar Shah (1712/13) went so far as to marry a notorious dancer, Lal Kunwar.[82] Under the influence of this domineering lady, her relations (including Niamat Khan) were ennobled and granted the *naubat*.[110] The Emperor, indulging in a life of pleasure, was not destined to enjoy power for long. He was deposed and strangled in the fort of Delhi!

As far as his delight for the fine arts and women was concerned, the colourful Mohammad Shah (1719-48) may even have surpassed his ancestors. Kamalbai, an extraordinary dancer, was one of his favourite courtesans and "remained in the imperial company with great honour and distinction year after year."

> And the favour of the Badshah's heart has also been directed to her. But nowadays, because the Emperor is still downcast over the incidents involving Nadir Shah, and there remains in him no interest in music, the Badshah has become disgusted with listening to songs and soothing

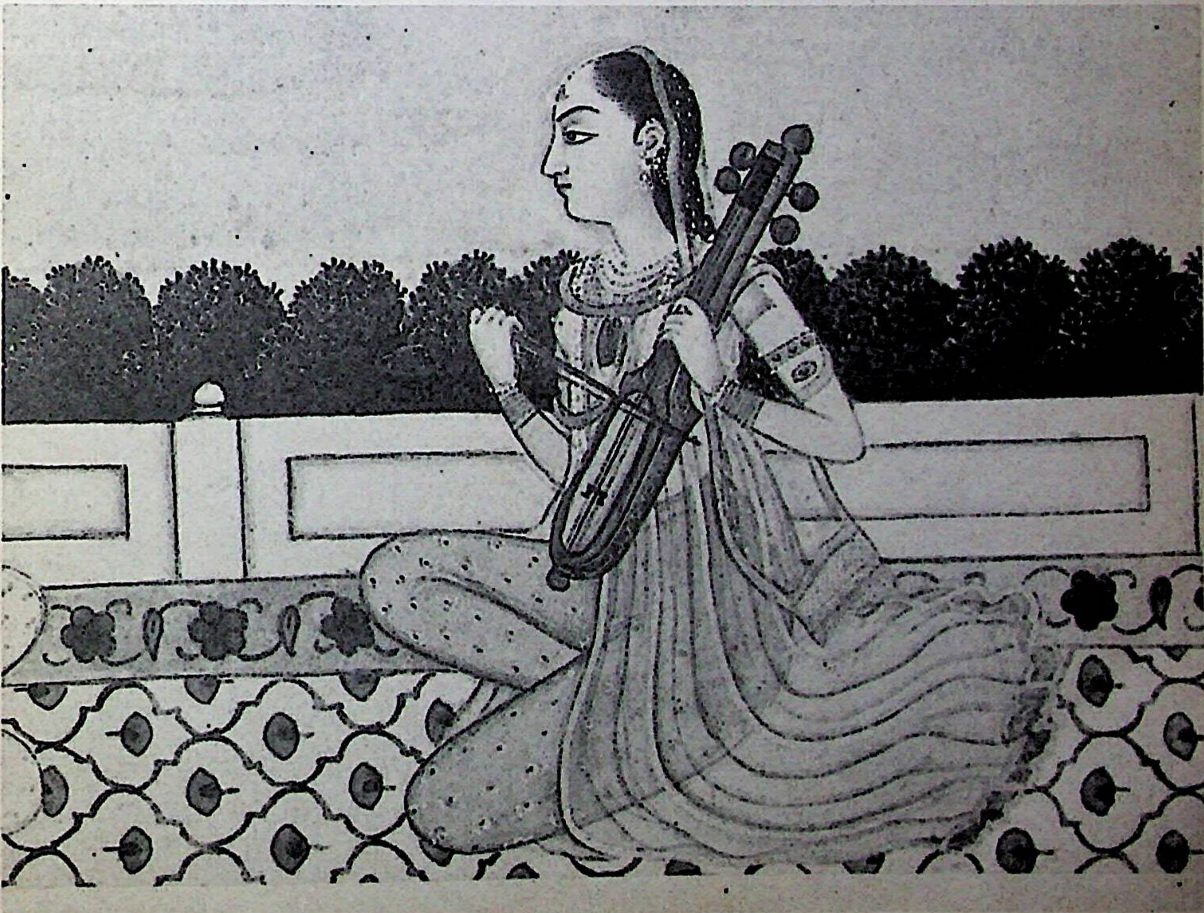


> his heart with musical instruments. And the powerful musicians of the royal court have been disbanded by written order. Therefore, Kamalbai also had to be dismissed from the royal association. If that had not happened, how could ordinary people have had the opportunity to hear her?
>
> There is depth of feeling in her voice and she sings with an ability to rouse sorrow. She adheres to the rules of music, makes not a single error, and sings Niamat Khan's *khayal raga*... She captures people in the net of her love very easily. Only the person who has gained her love knows her true value.[111]

Pannabai, one of Niamat Khan's distinguished disciples, sang like a *bulbul*. She cast a magical spell on her listeners and it is said that she also invented new *ragas* and instruments. "And then the injustice is that she is also good-looking. But the truth is that Pannabai is not for enjoyment; she is there for her melodies to be heard and delight to be had from her amazing art, and for her furtive smile to be seen, her sweet words heard."[112]

Other famous courtesans of the time were Chamani, Chakmak Wamani, Pana and Tanu, but more reputed and notorious than any of them was Nurbai.

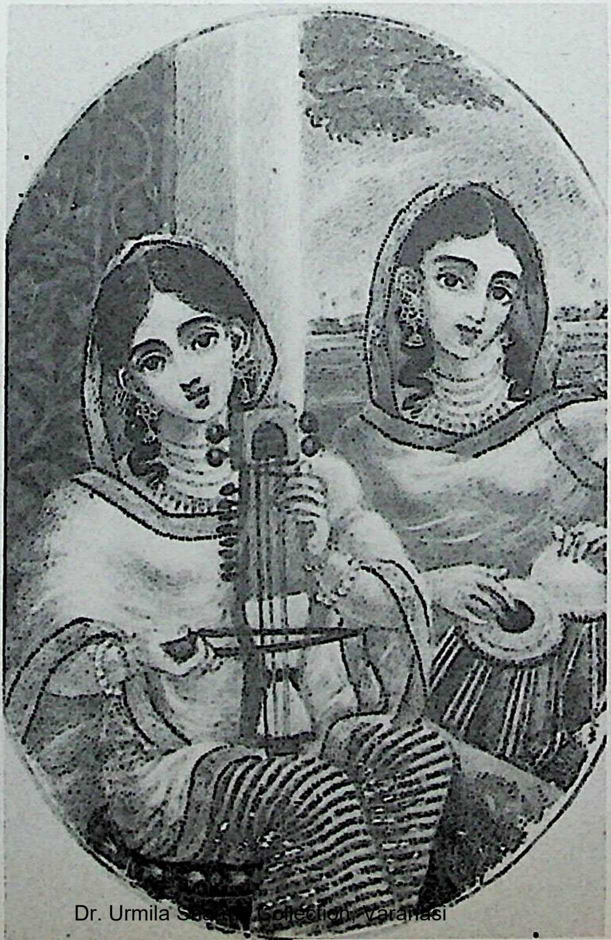
> She is a famous *domni* of Delhi. Great noblemen long to meet her and consider going to her house cause for boasting. Nurbai's house is bejewelled and highly decorated, like a grand court... Usually she rides by elephant and a protective contingent of servants and heralds surrounds her.

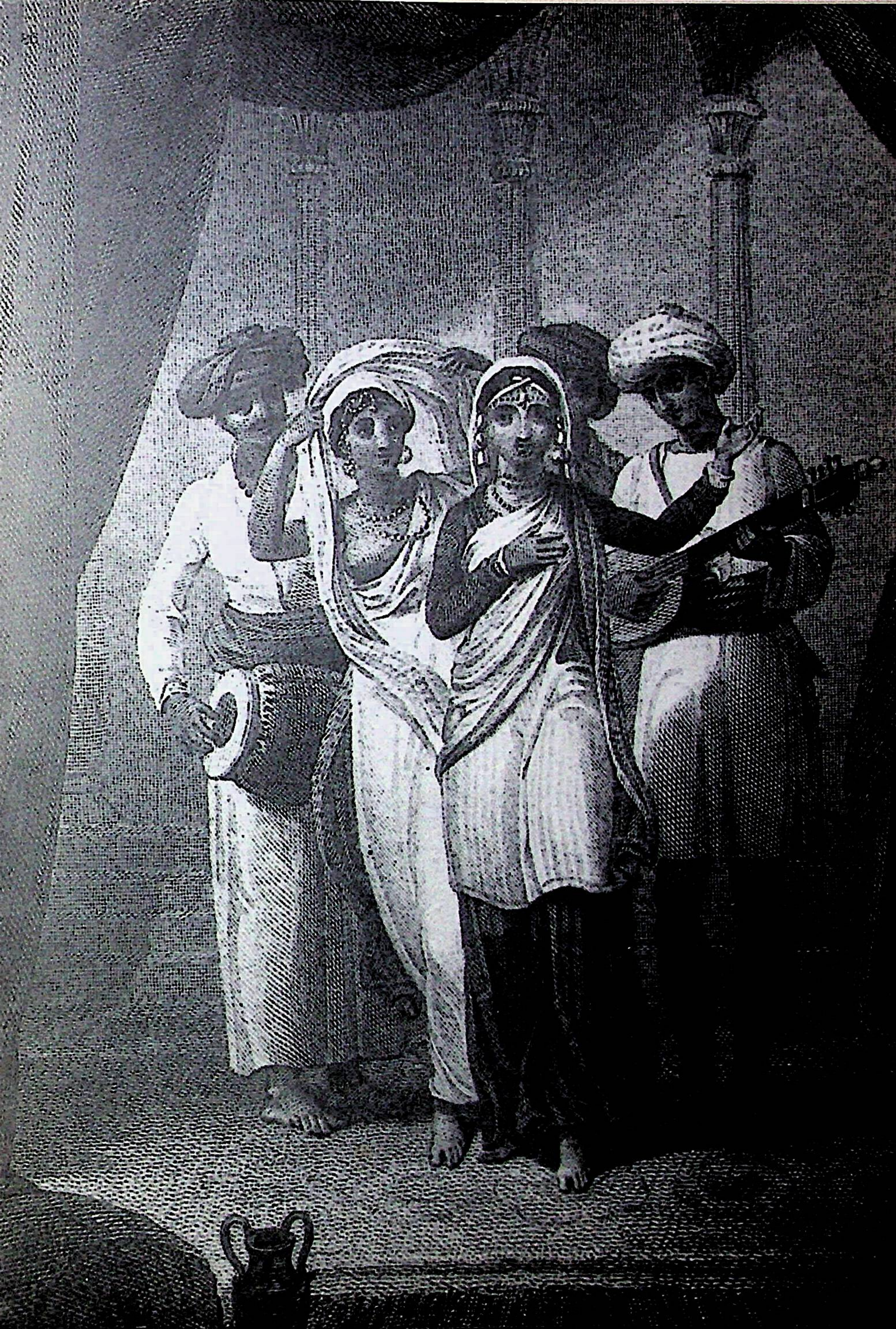


> Wherever she goes she is welcomed with precious jewels, and she carries countless wealth on her. And the regard of the noblemen is such that when they give her an invitation, they send expensive presents beforehand, and when she leaves they also send a pile of money with her. To this day, whoever was intimate with Nurbai has become a great ruined fool. . .
>
> Notwithstanding her cruelty she is beautiful, bold and magical of tongue. She is thoroughly acquainted with party etiquette, is highly intelligent, quick, discerning and pleasing of speech. Her conversation is brimful of eloquence and rhetoric. And she uses idioms in so correct a manner as even writers do not. . .
>
> And it is amazing that Nurbai is also an expert in music; she is very adept at singing *jangla*. Whenever she goes anywhere to sing, she takes a few women with her whom she calls Begum, Khanum and Gera. . .[113]

It is told that Nadir Shah was so enchanted by her musical powers and her ode in his honour, that he wanted to take her to Persia. "It was with the greatest difficulty that she could save herself from this last mark of his favour."[114] Nadir Shah, however, took piles of cash and jewels with him, and, above all, the precious Peacock Throne, thus imparting one more death-blow to an already exhausted Mughal Empire.

In the paintings of the 18th century, *kanchanis* are a recurrent theme.[83] Obviously, they played an important role in the monotonous and boring existence

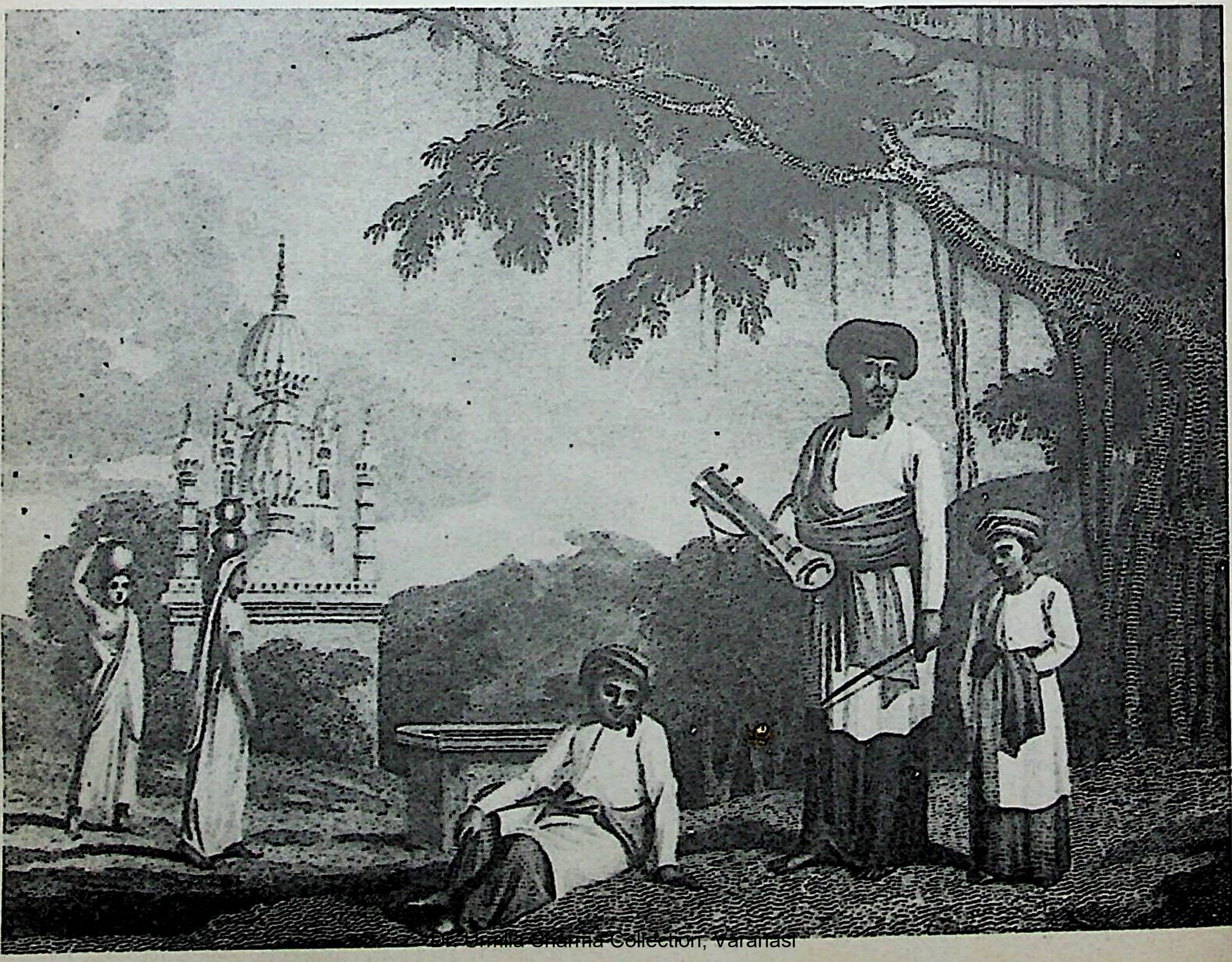




of queens, princesses and other royal ladies, who "pass their time in their rooms, each with her own set of musicians." The ladies of the *zenana* (women's quarter) are often depicted listening to girls playing *vina, tambura* or *rabab;* later, in the 18th century, they are entertained by courtesans who sing or dance, and are accompanied by female sarangi players and drummers.[84, 85] The sarangi being an instrument which, according to written and oral history, is played exclusively by men, it is somewhat surprising to find a good number of female sarangi players in the paintings. However, Mrs. Meer Hasan Ali (1832) explains that the *domnis,* "who are the singers and dancers admitted within the pale of *zeenahnah* life. . . are women of good character, and their songs are of the most chaste description, chiefly in the Hindoostaunie tongue. They are instructed in Native music and play on the instruments in common use with some taste,—as the *saattarah* (guitar), with three wire strings; the *surringhee* (rude-shaped violin); the *dhome* or *dholle* (drum), in many varieties, beaten with the fingers, never with sticks."[115]

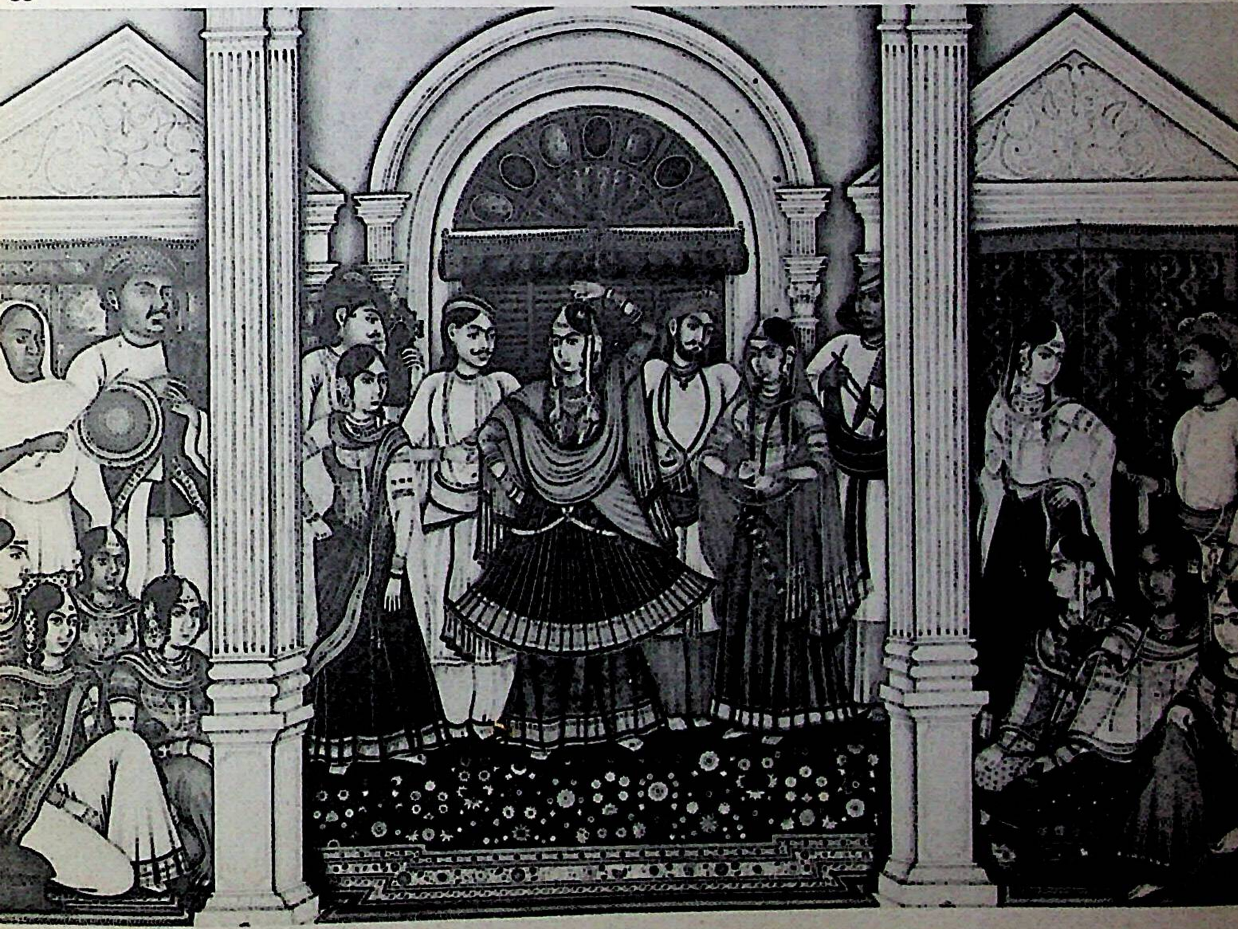
4.10 *Nautch*

It is not so surprising that courtesans, being the main performers at public festivals and private parties of the wealthy Indians, attracted the attention of Europeans. "When a black man has a mind to compliment an European, he treats him with a *notch. . .",* wrote Jemima Kindersley (in 1767) in one of her *Letters from the East Indies.* She explains that "the favorite and most constant amusement



of the great, both Mahomedans and Hindoos, and indeed all ranks of people, is called a *notch;* which is the performance of the dancing girls: every man who can afford it has at least one set of dancing girls, who make part of his *Zanannah.*" Jemima Kindersley was the wife of a lieutenant colonel of the Bengal Artillery. She continues to describe a 'nautch', as it was called by the Europeans in India.

> A large room is lighted up; at one end sit the great people who are to be entertained; at the other are the dancers and their attendants; one of the girls who are to dance comes forward, for... seldom more than one of them dance at a time; the performance consists chiefly in a continual removing [of] the shawl, first over the head, then off again; extending first one hand, then the other; the feet are likewise moved, though a yard of ground would be sufficient for the whole performance. But it is their languishing glances, wanton smiles, and attitudes not quite consistent with decency, which are so much admired; and whoever excels most in these is the finest dancer.
>
> The girl sings, while she is dancing, some Persian or Hindostan song; some of them are really pleasing to the ear, but are almost entirely drowned by the accompaniments: several black fellows stand behind, who likewise sing with all the strength of voice they are masters of, making, at the same time, the most ridiculous grimaces; some of them playing upon a *sitar,* which is something like a guitar, but greatly inferior even to that trifling instrument; others on a sort of drum, or tamborin usually called



> *tomtom;* but all this, loud as it is, is drowned by those who play with two pieces of bell-metal, which they work between their fingers, and make the same noise as braziers at work upon a large copper.[116]

Although Mrs. Kindersley could appreciate some of the songs, the accompaniments annoyed her. Interestingly, she refers to the *sitar,* a "modern instrument" (to quote Captain Willard), which, as several authors confirm, was quite commonly used in the nautch.[117]

Like other European writers (if they noticed the accompaniment at all), James Forbes (1765-82) observed that the dancing girls were "accompanied by musicians, playing on instruments resembling the guitar and violin."[118] Obviously, he was referring to the *rabab* and sarangi; the former instrument figures in one of his sketches depicting dancing girls from Bombay, while a sarangi (or *chikara*) is shown in the hands of a 'native' standing in view of the temple at Alibag on the Konkan coast.[86, 87]

T. D. Broughton (1809) notices that usually, "the principal dancer stands in the middle, and is generally accompanied by an inferior female singer or two, to assist her. The instrumental performers range themselves behind, consisting commonly of a couple of fiddlers; a man who plays upon two drums, called *tubla,* fixed in his girdle; and a boy, who clashes a couple of little brazen cymbals, called *munjeera*. . .[88] When a girl is to dance the *kuharwa,* she ties a sash round her loins, through which she pulls up her gown; puts another across her shoulders, and a man's turban upon her head; and in this dress, unless she is naturally very pretty, she looks worse than before; though to a fine animated countenance it gives a certain spirited and roguish air, which seldom fails to attract a due degree of admiration. In this favourite dance the most indecent gestures are used, meant to raise admiration and desire; but which, in uninitiated English bosoms, seldom excite any thing but disgust. Such attractions has it nevertheless, that it is always called for; and young and old, great and small, Europeans as well as natives, look forward to the *kuharwa* with anxiety; and sit for hours to witness its performance."[119] Broughton records his experiences in the camp of Daulat Rao Sindhia, the adopted son of Mahadaji Sindhia (d. 1794) who is portrayed in a painting, entertaining two English officers to a nautch.[89] The main performer appears to dance the *kaharwa,* and is accompanied by several female singers, two sarangiyas, a *tabla* player and a musician who presumably plays the *manjira.*

When large numbers of young English officers and servants of the East India Company started migrating to India in the 18th century, the nautch became very popular among white men.[90, 92] Dancing girls must have realized that these lonely individuals, in search of excitement and female company, were a new source of income, because:

> . . . between the years 1778 and 1785, it is certain, that the prime sets of dancing girls quitted the cities, and repaired to the several cantonments, where they met the most liberal encouragement. Then the celebrated Kaunum was in the zenith of her glory! Those who did not witness the dominion she held over a numerous train of abject followers, would never credit, that a haughty, ugly, filthy, black woman [sic], could, solely by the grace of her motions, and the novelty of some Cashmerian airs, hold in complete subjection, and render absolutely tributary, many scores of

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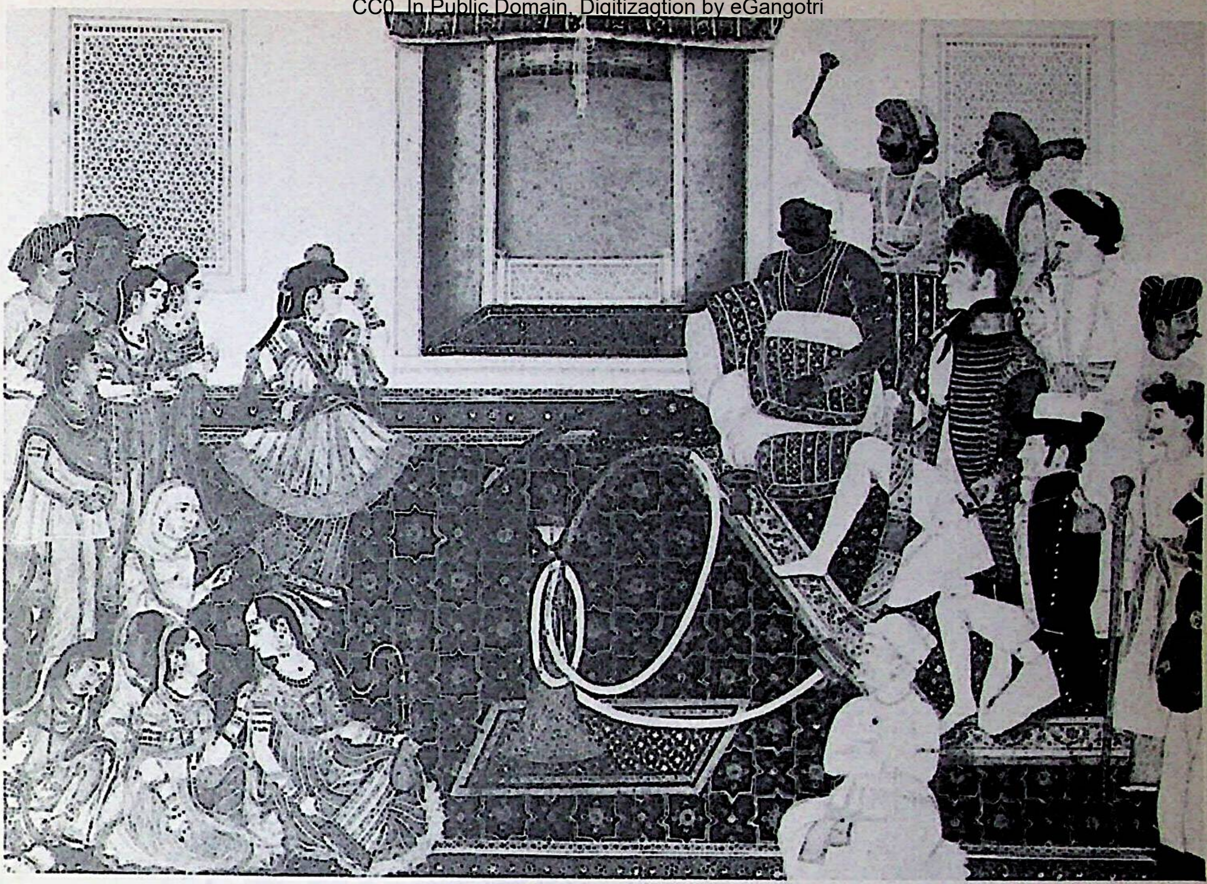

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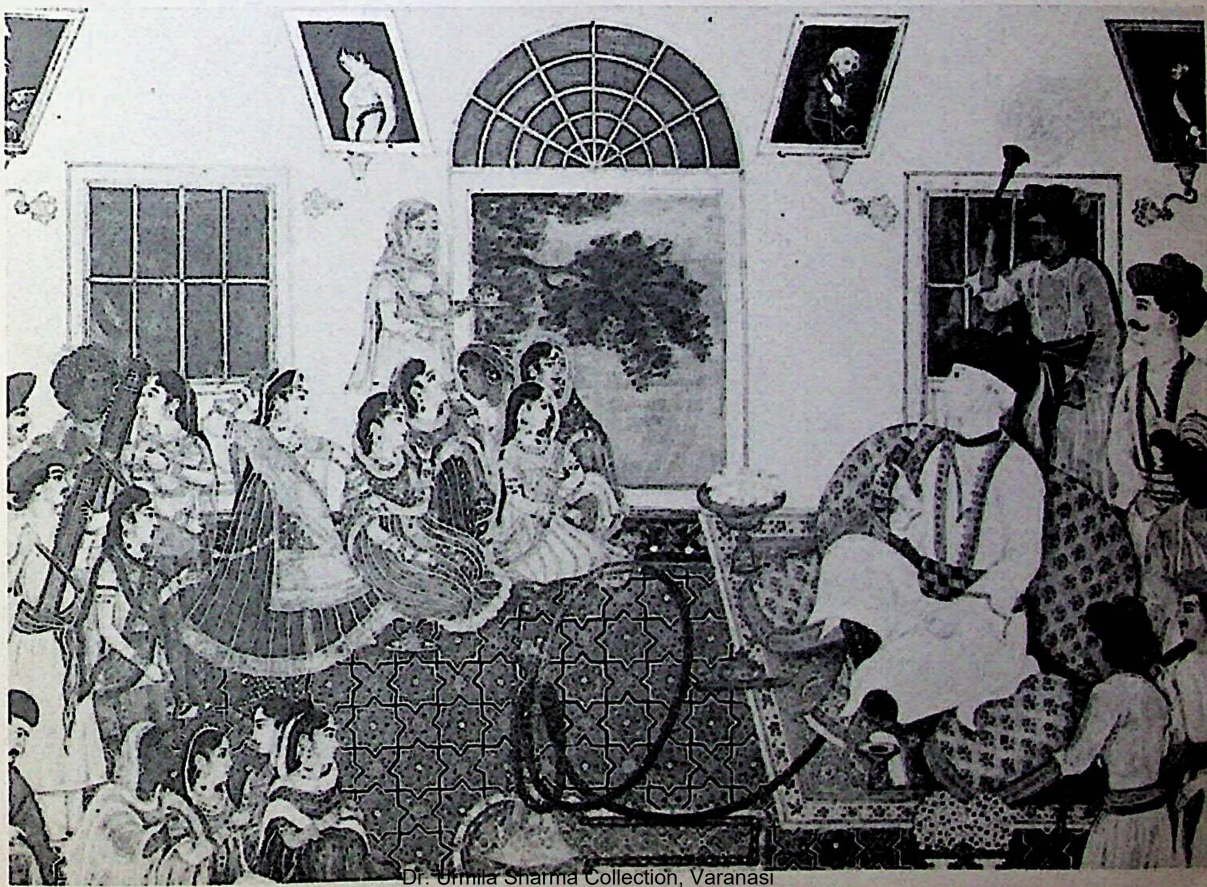
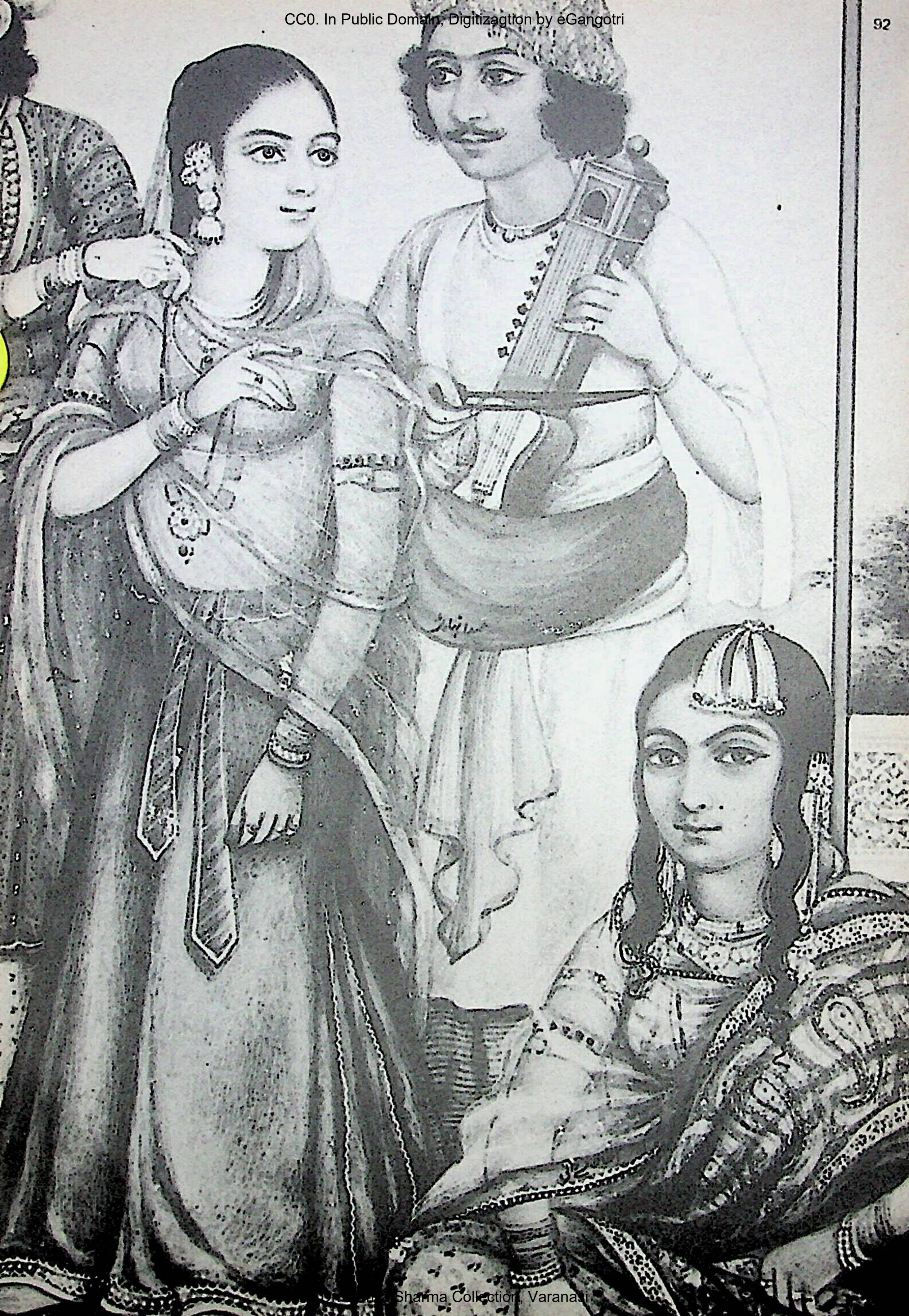


> fine young British officers! ...This diversion is now nearly obsolete among Europeans; a circumstance by no means discreditable, nor to be regretted.[120]

Whether Captain T. Williamson's concluding remarks, written in 1813, were wishful thinking or not, we do not know. However, most European tourists in India found something to say about the nautch. Often their descriptions are not entertaining but repetitive. Most of them talk about the costumes of the dancers and are dazzled by the jewellery. [91] "The dancing is very slow and very dull, but the dresses and ornaments are beautiful", writes Emily Eden (1838), the sister of the Governor-General, Lord Auckland.[121] Watching a nautch at the mansion of Colonel Skinner, the famous and hospitable 'Sikandar Sahib' of mixed blood, she remarks: "His house is fitted up in the native fashion, and he had all the best singers and dancers in Delhi, and they ... sang Persian songs which I thought made a very ugly noise; but Mr. B., who speaks Persian as fluently as English, kept saying, 'Well, this is really delightful—this I think is equal to any European singing—in fact, there is nothing like it'." A romantic soul like Mrs. Belnos (1832) fancied herself "transported to some enchanted region", portraying the nautch as a fairytale. [93] Others, like Mrs. Fenton (1826-30), who "had a violent curiosity to see a nautch", were very disappointed and "could not even laugh at it. I drove home cured for ever of all curiosity respecting native entertainments."[122]

More persistent and inquisitive, however, was Captain Robert Smith, who observed several nautches, trying to understand what it was all about:

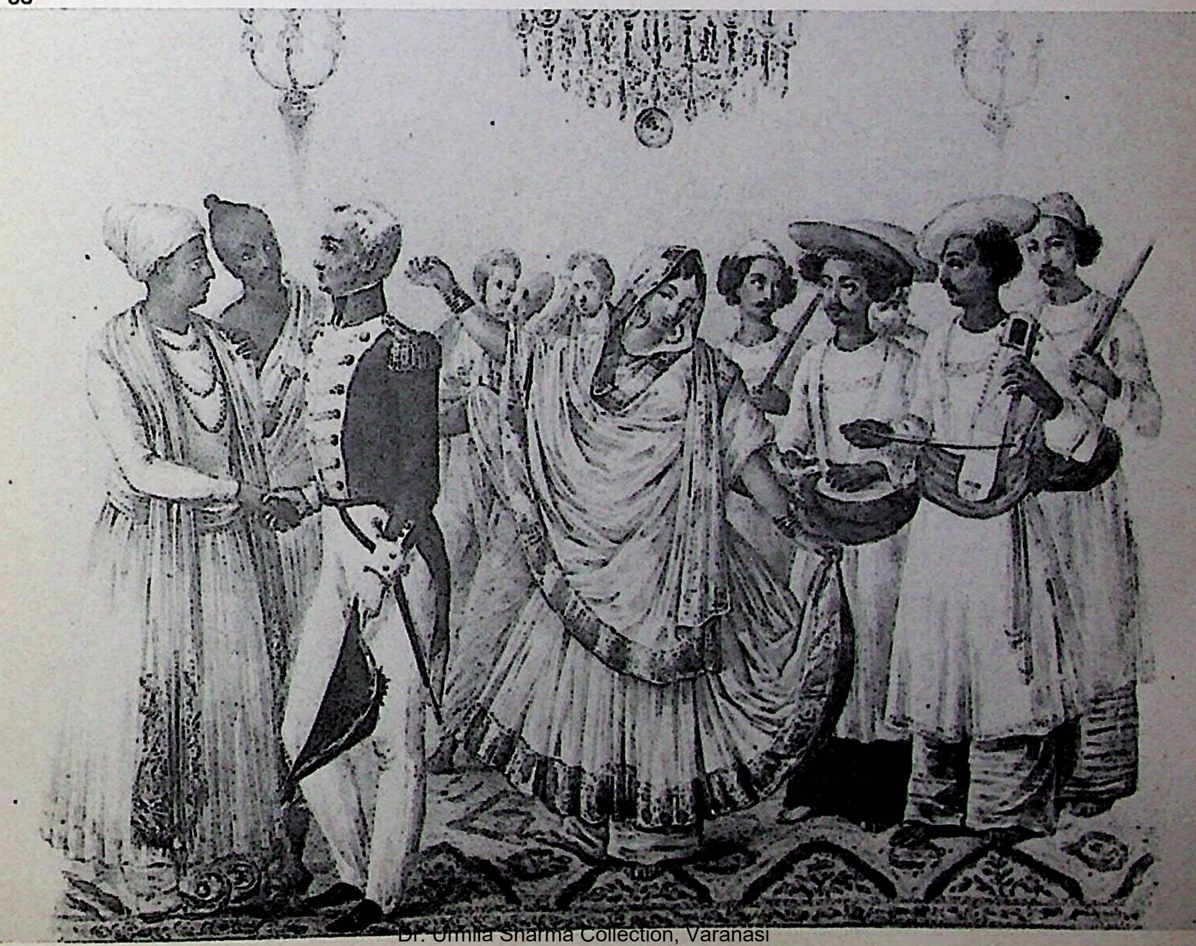
> At another nautch that I was afterward at, given by Mr. G. who was married to a native lady of high rank, in fact one of the royal family of Delhi, the performer in reciting her story shed tears, and the *musalchee* to convince us they were real bona fide tears that were rolling down her cheeks held the torch close to her face. This lady was quite a celebrated singer or actress, and though no beauty, I was informed had received large presents of jewels etc. ...
>
> It is difficult to convey to the English reader a proper idea of these performances, the accounts of scarcely any two travellers agreeing, some describing them as immodest dances, others as exhibitions of singing only; this discrepancy may be accounted for, in some measure, from the fact that the higher class of nautch girls only act and sing, accompanying the action by a sort of recitative, suiting their expressions and gestures to the subject, as fear, hope, love, jealousy etc. with a grace and elegance and earnestness of manner that cannot fail to rivet the attention... Others again of these nautch girls accompany the recitation with slow and graceful movements, beating time with their feet on which little silver bells are hung, to the music of the *saringee* and *sitar*. Another class which may be called the strolling nautch girls, are generally more active in their movements, often cutting many strange capers, but always endeavouring to suit the performance to the taste of the audience; but for my part I have never seen, and I have been at many of these exhibitions both of the highest and lowest orders, anything like what has been attributed to these performances by some writers...[123]



The opinion expressed by Robert Smith (who travelled in India between 1828-33) is quite characteristic of what an objective, educated Englishman thought about the nautch. Although he grew tired of the monotonous strains, he had no doubt that, to those who understood the language, it was "as interesting as any exhibition of that kind could be." He did make a sincere effort to distinguish between different classes of nautch girls, but he did not really care to understand their art.

"To be convinced that foreign music, such as we have not been accustomed to, is always repugnant to our taste, till habit reconcile us to it," remarks the learned Captain N. A. Willard (1834), "we need only refer to the sentiments of the several travellers who have recorded their particular feelings on hearing the music of nations with whom they have had but little intercourse. . . It should be a question likewise whether they have witnessed the performance of those who were reputed to excel in so difficult a practice."[124] Similarly, Solvyns notes that the original Hindu dance had "nothing in common with that which is performed all over India, by women known by the name of *Bayaderes, Baladeres* or *Bays;* a description of which is found in the works of many travellers."[125][vi]

He makes a distinction between ordinary *bais* (or *bayadères,* a corruption of the Portuguese word *baylhadeira*) and accomplished 'ramjannys' (*ramjanis*), who were originally Hindu court dancers. Dr. F. Buchanan, writing about the district of Bhagalpur in 1810-11, mentions that the common Muslim dancing girls were called *bai,* and their Hindu sisters 'rumzani' (*ramjani*). "These happen to be the



best in the district." 'Kheloni' (*khelni*) were also Hindu artists but "exceedingly bad dancers and singers", whereas *mirasis* were "a kind of dancing and musical girls who perform before Muhammedan women of rank."[126]

Generally, European travel accounts give very little information about the performers and the art itself. Mention is made of "the celebrated Nickee, of Calcutta,... the Catalani of Hindostan...[who] received 1,000 rupees (£ 100) nightly, wherever she [was] engaged", or Alfina of Delhi who, "like Calypso among her maidens, greatly excelled her fellows in stature, beauty and grace."[127] A few writers mention the sprightly *kaharwa* and Colonel James Tod (1820) speaks about the Punjabi *tappa*.

> Under the arcade of this pavilion, amidst a thousand welcomes, thundering of cannon, trumpets, and all sorts of sounds, we took our seats; and scarcely had congratulations passed and the area was cleared of our escorts, when, to the sound of the tabor and *sarangi*, the sweet notes of a Panjabi *tappa* saluted our ears. There is a plaintive simplicity in this music, which denotes originality, and even without a knowledge of the language, conveys a sentiment of the most fastidious, when warbled in the impassioned manner which some of these syrens possess. While the Mahratta delights in the dissonant *dhurpad*, which requires a rapidity of utterance quite surprising, the Rajput reposes in his *tappa*, which, conjoined with his opium, creates a paradise. [128]

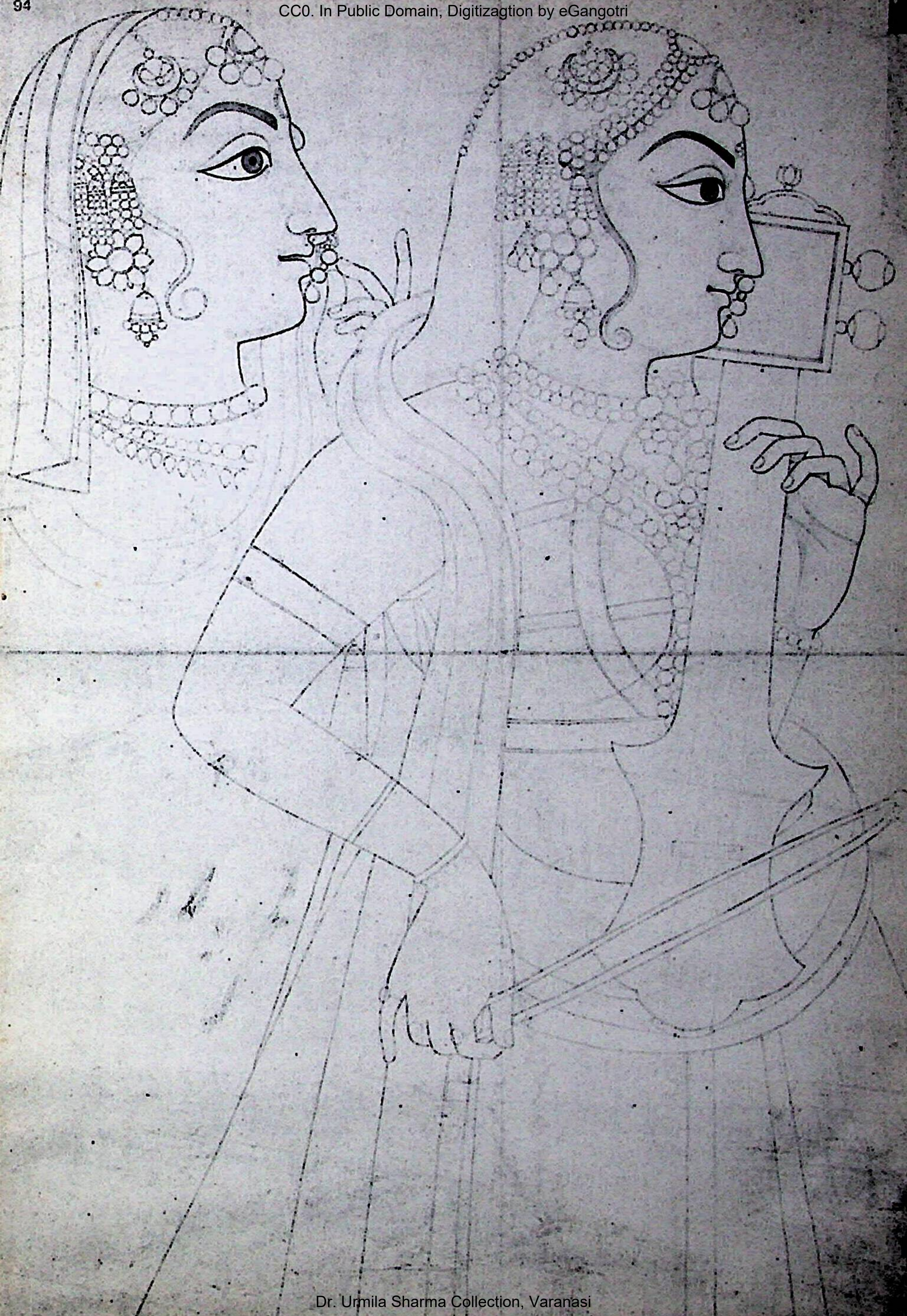
Most European authors, however, seem to be unaware that Rajputana, and later Oudh (Avadh), became major centres for the performing arts in the 18th century. In Jaipur, under the influence of Maharaja Sawai Pratap Singh (1778-1803), several important treatises on music were composed. The *Radha Govind Sangitsar*, compiled by four scholars after a musical conference, says that in the local language the *ravanahasta* was known as sarangi, and had three or four strings of gut.[129] It figures in many 18th century Rajasthani paintings and is often played by female musicians.[94]

The department of musicians and dancers (*gunijankhana*) of Ram Singh II (1835-80) was known all over India and housed 58 *kalanots* (*kalavants*, i.e. vocalists, *binkars* and *sitar* players), 44 women singers and dancers, 17 *pakhawaj* players, 21 sarangi players, 4 *kathaks* (dancers), 6 *rasdharis* (*ras lila* actors) and 6 *kartalis* (*kartal* players). Famous court musicians included Rajab Ali Khan Binkar (the guru of Ram Singh II), Bahram Khan, Karamat Ali Khan, Mubarak Ali Khan, Gage Khuda Bakhsh, Mohammad Ali Khan, Inayat Hussain Khan, and the great *sitar* players Amrit Sen and Amir Khan. The sarangi player Miyan Kalu Khan of Patiala was also attached to this court.[130]

4.11 *Fairies and fiddlers*

We have seen that, by the end of Mohammad Shah's rule, the Mughal Empire had crumbled, and that Delhi had lost its former glory. Courtesans, musicians and poets abandoned Delhi in favour of cities like Faizabad (later Lucknow), Banaras, Rohilkhand (later Rampur), Jaipur, Indore and so on. Quoting an eyewitness, Abdul Halim Sharar writes about Faizabad at the time of Shuja-ud-Daulah (1753-74):

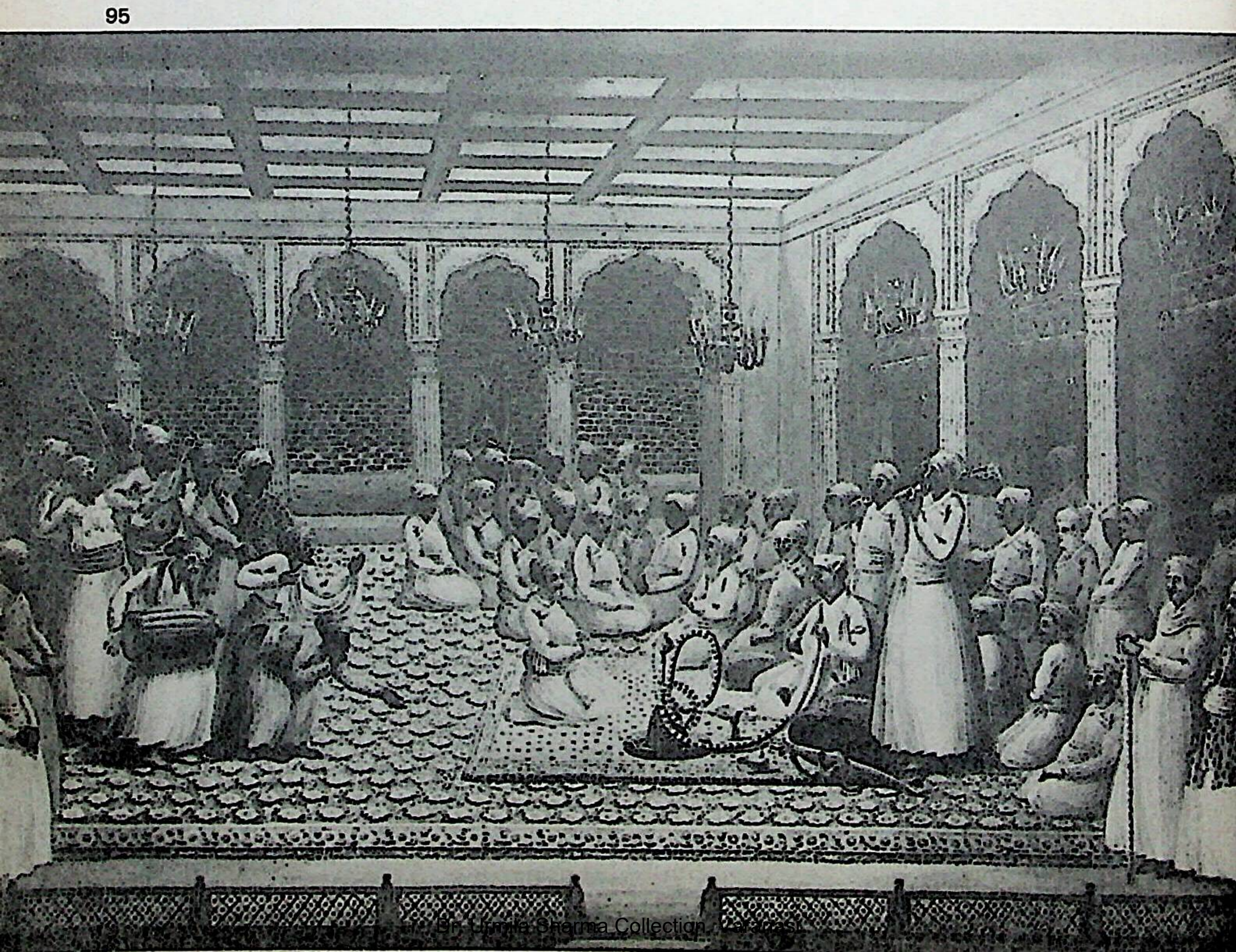
> The entire population of Shahjahanabad seemed to be making preparations to move there. Most of the eminent people of Delhi bade farewell to their



domiciles and turned towards the east. Night and day people kept coming and caravan after caravan arrived to stay and become absorbed into the environs of Faizabad. In no time persons of every race and creed, literary men, soldiers, merchants, craftsmen, individuals of every rank and class had gathered there...

A town of grandeur and dignity met the eye. In it fashionably dressed persons from Delhi, elegant sons of noblemen, skilled hakims, well-known troupes of men and women dancers and eminent singers from far and wide were employed by the administration, drew very large salaries and lived a carefree life of luxury. The pockets of high and low were filled with rupees and gold coins and it appeared as if no one had ever known poverty and want. The Navab Vazir Shuja-ud-Daulah was constantly engaged in promoting the prosperity and splendour of the town and its people. It appeared that in a very short time Faizabad would claim to be on a par with Delhi...

Such was Navab Shuja-ud-Daulah's achievement in Faizabad after a residence of only nine years, and during this time he honoured the town with his presence only for the four months of the yearly rainy season. He spent the rest of the year touring his realm, amusing himself and hunting. He was by nature attracted to beautiful women and was fond of dancing and singing. For this reason there was such a multitude of bazaar beauties and dancers in the town that no lane or alley was without them. Because of the Navab's rewards and favours they were in such easy



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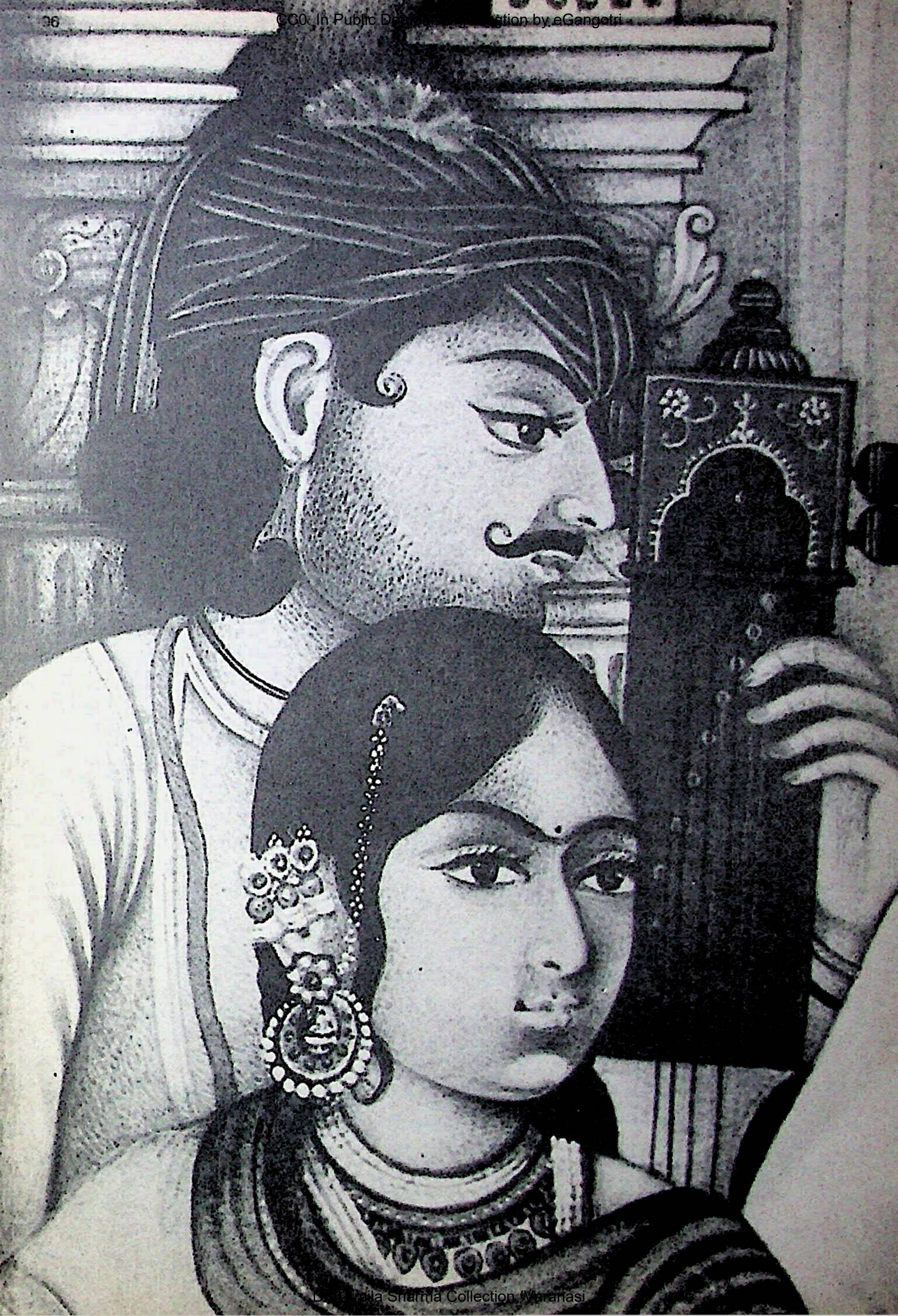

> circumstances and so wealthy that most of the courtesans had fixed abodes with two or three sumptuous tents attached to them.[131]

Mohammad Karam Imam lists an impressive number of well-known musicians in his *Ma'dan-ul Mousiqui* (1856), which makes it one of the most fascinating works on music. He notes that the famous *qawwali* singers, Miyan Jani and Ghulam Rasul (who in 1739 were residing in Delhi), had become court musicians of Nawab Asaf-ud-Daulah (1775-97). And concerning the renowned *dhrupad* singers and *binkars*, Amir Khan and Rahim Khan, he says: "They belonged to Delhi originally but went to Faizabad at the time of Nawab Shuja-ud-Daulah and then shifted to Lucknow in the days of Nawab Asaf-ud-Daulah."[132][95]

Imam also remarks that according to the great Haddu Khan, Bi Rehmanbai of Charkhari sang better than any male singer of the age. ("In fact, I have never heard any ustad who could equal her," he adds.) And describing various sarangi players, Imam notes that Jatan Kathak of Banaras became famous for accompanying Bi Rehmanbai. "He reproduces on the sarangi whatever she sings. The reason for this achievement is that all his life he has accompanied and learnt from Babu Ram Sahai and Bi Rehmanbai."[133]

Babu Ram Sahai, a non-professional musician from Allahabad, was an "outstanding exponent as well as teacher of *hori, dhrupad, khayal* and *tappa*". The sarangi player Mohammad Ali of Banda was also his disciple in *tappa* singing, whereas Khwaja Bakhsh Dhari, a disciple of the great Amir Khan Binkar, was (according to Imam) deft in fingering and had a grasp over *raga*. It is obvious that, on account of their association with great ustads and female singers, talented sarangi players were recognized as masters themselves. Some of them, such as Kallu Dhannu Dhari of Banaras, who (in the words of Imam) "plays sarangi and sings *khayal* very well", were also known as good singers.[134]

Other well-known sarangi players were Ali Bakhsh Dhari of Delhi, Hassan Bakhsh Dhari of Lucknow, his disciple Himmat Khan Kalawant of Bundelkhand and Sabit Ali Dhari of Gwalior. Zahur Khan Kalawant of Banda and Hassan Khan Dhari of Lucknow were noted for playing the *dhun*. . . "Besides these, there are thousands of others", writes Imam.[135][96]

The sarangi flourished. It had become the most prevalent Indian stringed instrument, was "found from Cape Comorin to Kashmir and [formed] an indispensable item at every dancing or theatrical performance."[136] Captain C. R. Day (1891) adds that the southern nautch ensembles usually consisted of two sarangis or 'English fiddles', one *mridanga* or *tabla*, one *shruti* (drone) and one *tala* or *jalra* (pair of cymbals). A similar configuration of instruments was used in the north, but the *shruti* was often replaced by a *tambura*. [97] "The use of the sarangi in Southern India—except in conjunction with nautches—is rapidly being discontinued, and an English fiddle tuned as a *vina* or sarangi is often substituted for it. Farther north the instrument appears likely to hold its place for a long time to come," writes Day, who also speaks about the 'southern sarangi', showing a small box-shaped instrument which, in fact, was used all over India.[137] Naturally, Day and all those writers who paraphrased him, were mistaken. Together with the female singers and dancers, the sarangi had migrated to the south, where it must have been quite popular during the last century.[98] This is corroborated by occasional references to well-known southern sarangi players, such as Devidas,

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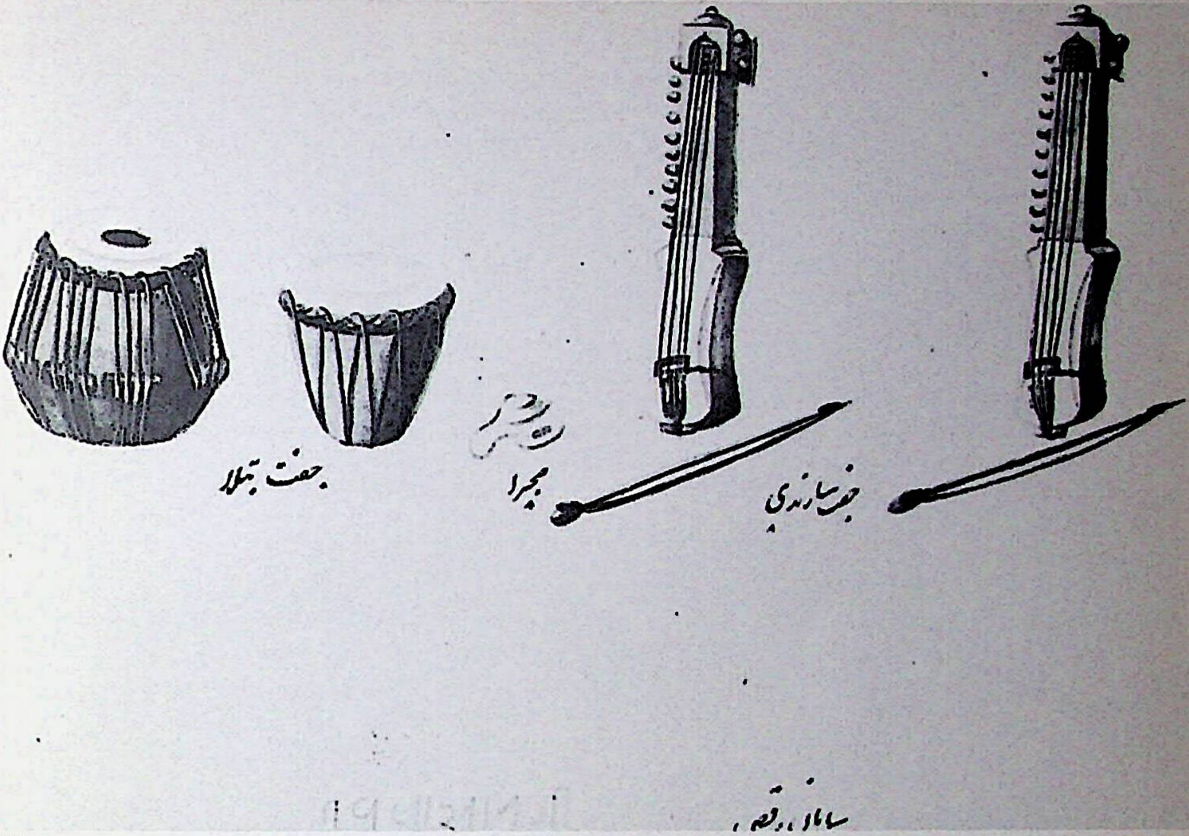
جفت طبلا
مجیرا
جفت سارنگی
سامان رقص

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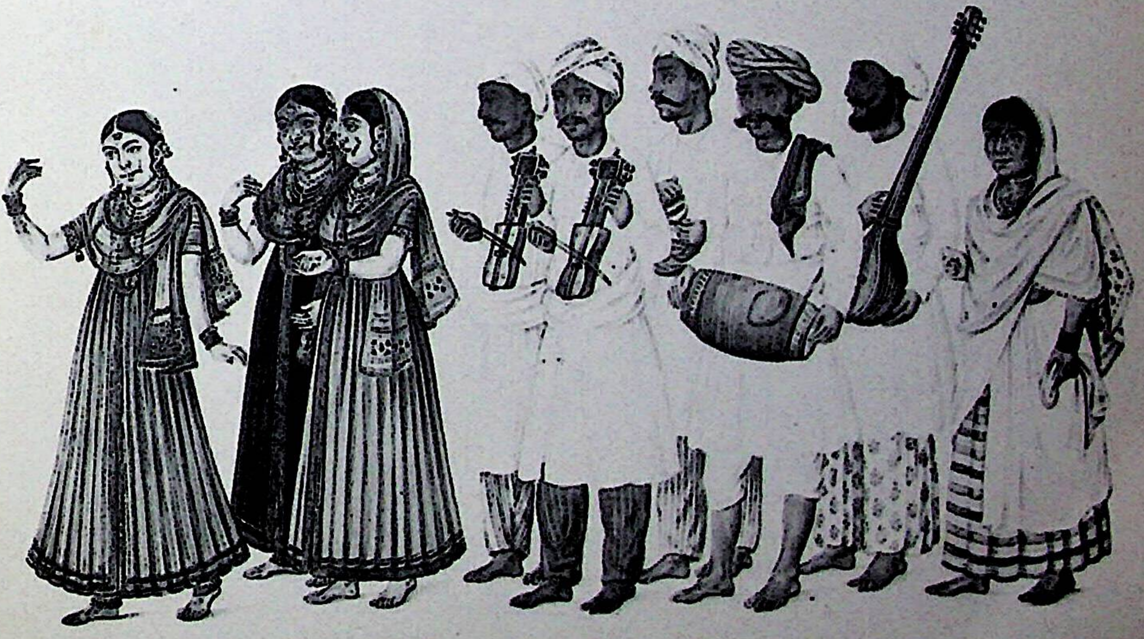


who was in the service of the Peshwa Baji Rao II (1796-1818), and Sarangi Chintamani and Sarangi Viraswami Nayak, who are mentioned by B. Trimbak Sahasrabudhe (1887) in his list of the principal musicians of the south.[138]

Imam completed the *Ma'dan-ul Mousiqui* at the time of Wajid Ali Shah, when *ghazal* and *thumri* were the fashion of the day; when *kathak* prospered as never before, [99] and the *sitar* had become recognized as a major solo instrument. Sharar, quoting an expert, writes:

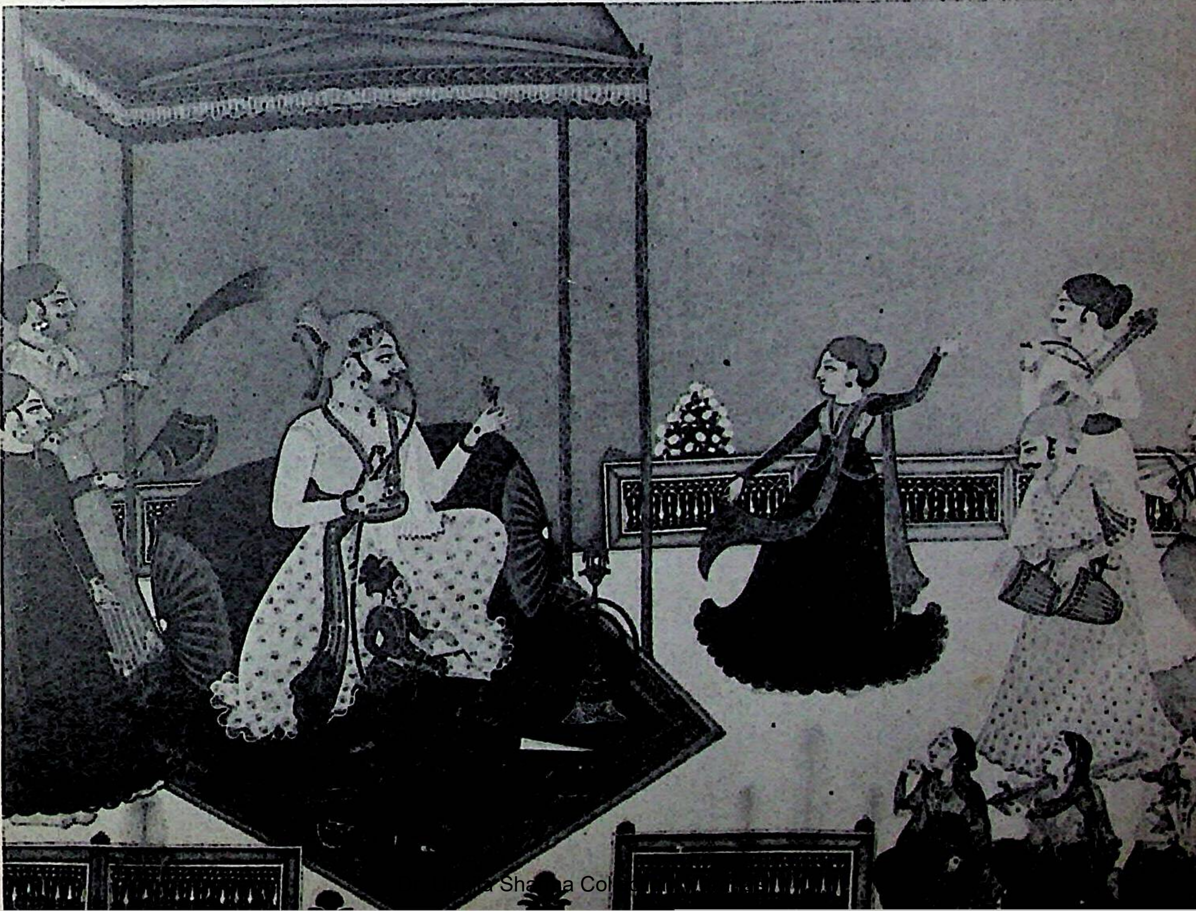
> There was much talk of music at the time of Wajid Ali Shah, but the art had fallen from favour and only the commonplace aspects were in vogue. In Lucknow, Kadar Piya composed *thumris*, which became popular with the masses with the result that music was cheapened. Most music-lovers lost interest in the classical forms of *ragas* and *raginis* and began to enjoy Kadar Piya's *thumris*...
>
> But whilst little interest was taken in pure classical music, expert musicians were much esteemed at the royal court. The reason was that Wajid Ali Shah had been taught the science of music by Basit Khan and had a very good understanding of it. Being highly talented, the King had evolved new *raginis* to his own liking... Wajid Ali Shah was a master at the art and possessed the knowledge of an expert but he cannot escape the criticism that it was his conventional and cheap tastes that made the music of Lucknow frivolous and easily understandable by all. In accordance with popular tastes even the most discriminating singers omitted difficult techniques and based their music on light, simple and attractive tunes which could be appreciated by everyone.[139]

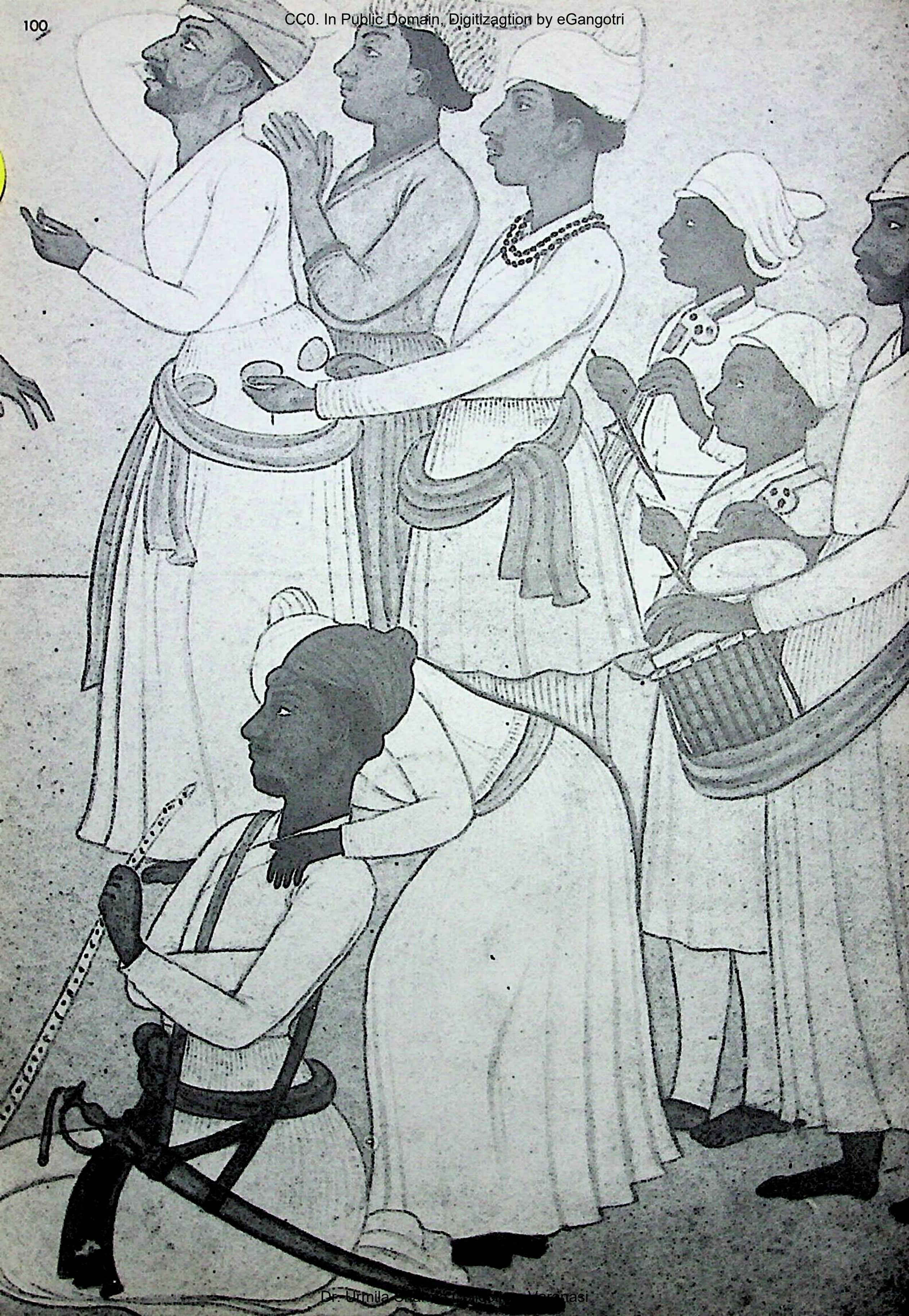
Literature and the lighter performing arts blossomed but it was a time of decadence as well. "An idea came to my mind that I should admit in my harem as many dancing girls as possible", writes the king himself.[140] All that mattered to him were his women and his arts. For this purpose, he established a special institution, the Parikhana (literally Fairy-house) where more than a hundred beautiful girls were instructed in the arts of music and dance. "He would fall in love with female palanquin-bearers, courtesans, domestic servants and women who came in and out of the palace, in short with hundreds of women, and because he was heir to the throne, he had great success with his love-affairs, the shameful accounts of which can be read in his poems, writings and books. His character, therefore, appears to be one of the most dubious in all the records of history," writes Sharar, while Imam observes that "the Sultan of Lucknow also began his reign well. But slowly he lost himself to wine... The kingdom disintegrated. Artists who lived on the patronage of the Nawab were thrown into the welter of despair and the foreigners who were waiting for an opportunity took away everything."[141]

The Resident at the court of Lucknow, Sir W. H. Sleeman, greatly disapproved of the behaviour of the king. Credited as one of the most reliable and compassionate English writers on India, he has been praised as a man with "great sympathy for the Indians and their culture... there is not even a hint of contempt for anybody."[142] This is hard to believe when we read the following passages in his correspondence and book, *A Journey through the Kingdom of Oude in 1849-1850*.

He [Wajid Ali Shah] spends all his time with the singers and the females they provide to amuse him, and is for seven and eight hours together living in the house of the chief singer, Rajee-od Dowla—a fellow who was only lately beating a drum to a party of dancing-girls, on some four rupees a-month. These singers are all Domes, the lowest of the low castes of India, and they and the eunuchs are now the virtual sovereigns of the country . . . No member of the royal family or aristocracy of Oude is ever admitted to speak to or see his Majesty, and these contemptible singers are admitted to more equality and familiarity than his own brothers or sons ever were; they go out, too, with greater pomp than they or any of the royal family can; and are ordered to be received with more honours as they pass through the different palaces. The profligacy that exists within the palace passes all belief, and these things excite more disgust among the aristocracy of the capital than all the misrule and malversation that arise from the King's apathy and incapacity . . .[143]

The most powerful favourites were two eunuchs, two fiddlers, two poetasters, and the Minister and his creatures. The Minister could not stand a moment without the eunuchs, fiddlers and poets, and he is obliged to acquiesce in all the orders given by the King of their benefit. The fiddlers have the control over administration of civil justice; the eunuchs over that of criminal justice, public buildings, etc. The Minister has the land revenue; and all are making enormous fortunes.[144]

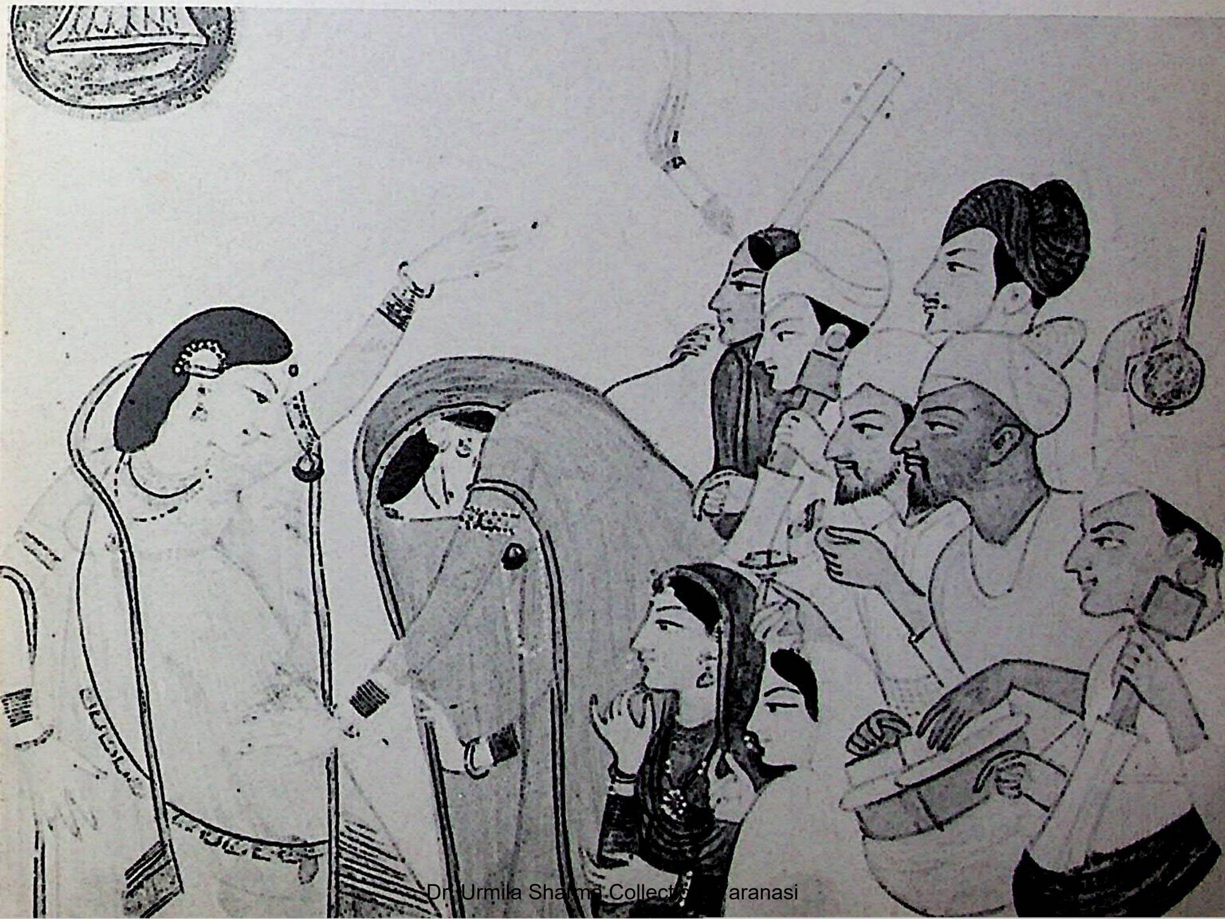




Dr. Urmila Sha[illegible] Varanasi

According to Sleeman, the king "has become utterly despised and detested by his people for his apathy amidst so much suffering, and will not have the sympathy of any one . . ."[145] Whether this was true or not, historians may decide. It is certain, however, that Wajid Ali Shah will be remembered as the last great advocate of the fine arts; a man with an extremely sensitive nature who was a good writer, singer, composer and a fine dancer. Artists were treated with respect and honoured. In Imam's words: "I had occasion to hear thousands of artists. Nawab Wajid Ali Shah's great patronage to art afforded a unique opportunity to a vast number of artists, especially musicians, to gather in Lucknow. The patronage extended to artists by the Nawab was so great that even *dharis* were raised to the position of nobles."[146] Indeed, even accomplished 'fiddlers' were revered for their art, irrespective of their social status. "There is an anecdote of a rajah", writes N. A. Willard, "who in token of his approbation presented a favourite player with a silver *sarungee,* on which he was to perform before him."[147]

The contrasting opinions of English and Indian writers about 'fairies and fiddlers'—courtesans and sarangi players—are not easy to reconcile. Women artists are often portrayed by the English as "prostitutes who usually sing songs of the most lascivious character, accompanied by gestures and movements of the body having an obscene meaning,"[148] and musicians are described as "the lowest of the low" (W. H. Sleeman), or, as Captain Thomas Skinner (1832) puts it, "a debauched looking set of fellows, who beat the tom-tom and play on the most common Hindoo viol. They stand in a row behind the dancers and, not content with their instrumental noise, vociferate with all their might in concert with it."[149][100, 101] There is no regard



whatsoever for their artistic qualities, nor do the British (Willard and a few others excepted) make a distinction between renowned ustads or highly refined women singers and vulgar musicians or harlots who were not even allowed to settle in Lucknow's Chowk. In this respect, esteemed and oft-cited ethnographers hardly improved on the views of their predecessors. Indifferent to the art of courtesans and musicians, they bluntly portray them as 'prostitutes and pimps'.[150] That high-class courtesans, the so-called *deredar tawaifs*, were often extremely modest and dedicated artists, is clear from the following description by Mirza Jaffar Hussain:

> They were outstanding artists. Many of them were superb dancers and singers. They were suited for harem life. They possessed enviable manners, etiquette and politeness . . . Usually a *tawaif* remained attached to one noble for life or spent her life in the service of two or three nobles, not simultaneously but one after the other. However, she usually maintained friendly relations with a number of *rais-es*.
>
> These courtesans did not normally appear in public. The nobility and gentry themselves visited them. However, sometimes they went to see friendly nobles on their own or on request. In the noble's *darbar*, there would be free and unreserved exchange of views which usually concerned prose, poetry and humour. The courtesan attended such *darbars* with her face fully covered.
>
> They considered it necessary to maintain the traditional culture of Lucknow. Their good manners were not assumed but had become imbibed in their life. In fact, the whole atmosphere of their house appeared pure and clean. The nobility and gentry used to send their sons to them to learn culture and etiquette.[151]

Mirza Mohammad Hadi Ruswa draws a similar picture in his famous Urdu novel, *Umraojan Ada*, and, like the former author, he seems to have had an intimate knowledge of the world of courtesans.[152] It is a fabulous work, unfolding the life story of a reputed singer, and drawing attention to the vital role of these women in an urban culture. But despite the efforts of various writers, the truth remained veiled.

4.12 *Decline*

After Oudh was annexed in 1856 and Wajid Ali Shah was deported to Calcutta, "the foreigners . . . took away everything", including the dignity of Indian artists. "The musicians who accompany regular nach players, are always Mussulmans of the caste of Mir or Mirasi . . . and are called 'Dom'; this term is not however considered complimentary, and would be a positive insult if addressed to any one else". Professional musicians, continues B. H. Baden Powell (1872), "are looked on with a sort of contempt, like surgeons."[153] To illustrate this, the son of the late Abdul Majid Khan told me the following anecdote about his grandfather, a sarangi player who died in 1917.

> Once, while Abdullah Khan was being shaved, he started humming a song. The village barber asked him: "Are you a musician?" Innocently he replied: "Yes, I am". Upon which the barber refused to complete the job and left him half-shaved. It was not easy to find another barber who was willing to trim the other side of his beard.

Slowly courtesans and sarangi players began losing their prestige and their place in society and culture. New elite groups started preaching Victorian morals and the social purity and anti-nautch movements finally succeeded in impressing upon upper-class Indians that watching nautches was a vice. "There were times when it seemed a lost cause. The reformers ventured an approach to Lord Curzon, who was well known for his stern views on the moral conduct required of the ruling race. But his reply was cold. Like other high personages he professed his unconcern: 'The Viceroy is not himself interested in these performances; but he hardly thinks the matter is one upon which he is called upon to make any pronouncement or to take any action.' But the reformers won a victory in 1905. Another Prince of Wales was to visit Madras with his Princess. The executive committee appointed to administer the fund collected for their reception unanimously decided against a nautch."[154] In the twenties, various bills to abolish prostitution were presented to the Indian legislature. It is said that on one such occasion, a protest meeting was organised in the house of the famous sisters, Nanhua and Bachua, the *chaudharains* heading the *tawaifs* of Lucknow, who were disciples of the legendary *kathak* dancer, Bindadin.[155]

As the number of women singers decreased, sarangi players also began losing their jobs as accompanists and teachers. Yet it proved to be impossible to completely abolish the institution of courtesans, and during the first half of this century, quite a few sarangi players started their professional careers in the *kothas* where the girls entertained their customers.[102] Mohammad Jan, the prototype of an old sarangi player, was one of them. Let us hear what he has to say about the last days of the *tawaif:*

> When I was quite young, I began playing with professional songstresses . . . I travelled a lot with Fakurunnissa and we performed in Karachi, Peshawar, Bombay, Calcutta, Baroda and Ahmedabad. We visited Junagadh, Kathiawar, Bhavnagar, Gondol and many other small princely states where the rajas were great lovers of art. We also went to Gwalior to celebrate the coronation ceremony of the Maharaja. Many *tawaifs* and ustads were invited for that occasion. Fakurunnissa was very beautiful and a good singer. She was my pupil, and I played with her for almost twelve years. After the partition in 1947, she went to Pakistan.
>
> Chammubai, who became known as Shamshad Begum, performed frequently on the radio. She was another excellent singer whom I often accompanied. Shamshad Begum was a famous figure in Delhi, and the head of many *tawaifs*. She learned music from Hidayat Hussain, my uncle, and I also taught her. After marrying a rich man, she left the profession. Shamshad Begum is still alive today.
>
> Fakurunnissa and Chammubai had a wide repertoire. They could sing *khayal, thumri, tappa, tarana, dadra, ghazal* and *khamsa. Khamsa,* which consists of four lines or couplets, was once very popular, but is forgotten nowadays. The music and poetry which the *tawaifs* sang was very good, classical. Now their music has become cheap, filmy. Even if they were still to sing classical songs or recite high-class verses, who would there be to understand and appreciate them?
>
> *Baijis* learned mainly from sarangi players. I would visit their houses three or four times a week, in the morning. Other musicians went daily to practise

> with them. If they were rich and wished to expand their knowledge, they would spend a lot of money to receive training from different masters, most often reputable artists who came to their homes to teach them. Even Acchan Maharaj, the great *kathak* guru, taught dance to *baijis.* Hirabaiji, a famous and wealthy *tawaif* of the *rais-es,* learned *abhinaya* from Krishna Maharaj, and all the great exponents of *kathak* frequently visited her house in Kanpur. She wore large earrings and a necklace with big diamonds and emeralds. Hirabaiji was such a good performer that she could make people cry . . . There were many other accomplished women singers, but after the fifties, their prosperity started declining.
>
> Performances of these professional songstresses were known as *mujras.* The customers were always received in a special room. Sometimes there was only one visitor, but at other times there were as many as ten. The visitors would usually ask to hear a particular song. The girl would then stand up and please her client. Although they wore *ghunghrus,* in general they did not dance very much.
>
> The audience consisted only of men, and then, only those who could offer a certain amount of money, depending on how pleased they were. Some gave one hundred rupees, others fifty or twenty-five. The rate for the musicians, two sarangi players and one *tabla* player, was fixed at 37.5%, which they divided among themselves. It was common for the sarangi player to be rewarded with silver coins, which he would slip into a hole in the skin of his instrument!
>
> With Fakurunnissa I went to Rawalpindi to attend a yearly festival, called *Imam-ka-mela.* Thousands of *tawaifs* from all over the country came to this *mela* which lasted a week. In a large tent, at least ten *tawaifs* performed and 'spent time' with their customers . . . behind a curtain. All kinds of people, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs and Christians came there and spent lavishly. Sometimes a *tawaif* would earn as much as 10,000 rupees! After the people started drinking and fighting, such *melas* were forbidden by the government.[156]

"The end for us began with Gandhiji", says Munirbai of Lucknow. "With freedom. And with the Arya Samaj. The Arya Samajis were always against us. They said we were a corrupting influence and deserved no place in civilized society. In fact, it was largely the Arya Samaj campaign that was responsible for the concerted police drive against the *kothewalis* in Lucknow in December 1958."[157] Munirbai, who is in her nineties, was a student of the great *kathak* maestro Shambhu Maharaj and herself a dancer of repute, when the Chowk was still inhabited by almost 2000 *deredar tawaifs.* She relates how the police action so terrorized the *tawaifs,* that many of them fled the city, whilst others gave up the profession. It marked the end of a Great Tradition, and was the main reason why the sarangi declined so rapidly during this century.

4.13 *Rise of the harmonium*

The sarangi received a final death-blow from the harmonium, which was invented by Alexandre F. Debain of Paris in 1840.[158] As soon as it was introduced to India, the harmonium became very popular: first of all in Calcutta, where Dwarkanath Tagore is said to have remodelled it to suit the requirements of Indian musicians.[159] The author of *Gita Sutra Sar* (1885) and *Harmonium Shiksha* (1899), Krishna Dhan Banerjee, praised the sweet sounds of the harmonium but also observed (according to his commentator), "that, due to [its] artificial notes and the impossibility of playing *mir* [*mind*] . . . Indian music . . . could not . . . be properly played and that as the *rasa* . . . would be altogether destroyed by harmonium, piano etc., it would be immensely unwise to play Hindustani music on these instruments."[160]

The harmonium certainly had many opponents. Rabindranath Tagore was one of them, and Ananda K. Coomaraswamy (1912) writes:

> None can forecast the future of Indian music. At present it is rapidly vanishing before the gramophones, harmoniums and brass bands of modern Western commerce and modern Indian taste. Yet as it still exists, Indian music is the most significant of surviving Indian arts . . .[161]
>
> But, as I think, no harmonium of any kind should ever be regarded as a *substitute* for the *tambura,* because the quality of tone of the *tambura* is so infinitely superior to that of the harmonium . . . above all, the harmonium should never be used as an accompaniment to the voice, leading or imitating note by note.[162]

A. H. Fox Strangways also strongly condemned the harmonium, which, in 1910, had "penetrated already to the remotest parts of India. It dominates the theatre, and desolates the hearth; and before long it will, if it does not already, desecrate the temple. Besides its deadening effect on a living art, it falsifies it by being out of tune with itself. This is a grave defect, though its gravity can be exaggerated; it could also be lessened by a revised tuning."[163] A harmonium tuned in twenty-two *shrutis* was designed and manufactured by H. Keatley Moore of London. With the help of Abdul Karim Khan and other singers, K. B. Deval and E. Clements used it for their scientific studies of Indian scales.[164] The *shruti* harmonium could not, however, compete with the ordinary, tempered harmonium, and, to the dismay of Ethel Rosenthal, it was "no longer on the market" in 1928.[165]

Strong criticism of the harmonium could not prevent musicians from liking it. Being a novel, foreign instrument, no social label could be attached to it. More important, it was a handy instrument, easy for the singers themselves to play and master. Not all musicians were in favour of the accompaniment provided by sarangi players and drummers. B. A. Pingle (1894), for instance, was of the opinion that "another cause of deterioration in singing of our day, is the strength of *sath* (band or accompaniment) which is the principal hindrance."

> With the majority of singers we find 2 boys or assistants, 2 big *tanpuras* or *tamboras,* 2 big fiddles [*sarangis*] with as many strings and holes as the instrument can bear and a noisy *pakhavaj* or *tablabaya.* In some performances the above list is greatly swelled . . . It should be borne in mind that the audience like to hear the vocalists as well as the instrumentalists. Singers, in making their headway against so many odds and so much power brought literally to play upon them, are seen opening their mouths and we are led to fancy that they are singing; but, honestly speaking, nothing comes out of their mouths, except the pantomimic action, contortion of the features and above all the most funny and comic expressions of the different phases

> of anthropomorphous animals, the band effectually drowning whatever vocal effect might be intended . . . It is necessary for an artistic performance to have an accompaniment of a few instruments as a support and addition to the voice, but it is also very desirable that the instrumentalists should rest satisfied with their opportunity for displaying their skill without attempting to ruin the voice of their co-operator.[166]

The rivalry between singers and sarangi players, testing each other's mettle, could sometimes become overwhelming. Vocalists, therefore, often preferred the soft accompaniment of a harmonium to the challenge posed by the sarangi. Obviously, Pingle approved of the harmonium, because he writes: "It is, however, to be hoped that further steps in the above directions may be stayed and discouraged. One of the best indications to that effect, is the adoption of European wind-instruments (the only defect in them is that they get out of tune soon) to replace the string-instruments which do not give a long current of sound unless produced by a bow, and that too is not in unity or quality with the voice."[167]

Bhaiya Ganpat Rao (d. 1924) has been credited with the popularization of the harmonium. "In this he was a pioneer. He really knew how to express emotions through music", relates D. C. Vedi.

> He was the son of Maharaja Jivaji Rao Sindhia of Gwalior, and his mother, Chandrabhaga Devi, was an excellent singer. In Gwalior, Bhaiyaji learned *dhrupad* and *sitar* from the great *binkar*, Bande Ali Khan (c. 1820-84). After his mother left Gwalior and settled in Lucknow, he continued his studies with Sadiq Ali Khan, who was a famous *vina* player, *thumri* and *tappa* singer, and an author as well.[168]
>
> At first nobody liked the harmonium and it was not used for classical music. But Bhaiyaji was able to play the harmonium in such a way that everybody began liking it. He played in a soft, inimitable way, giving the right touches, his special quality being to apply classical techniques to the light songs of Uttar Pradesh. This is why everybody tried to copy him, and people still remember him . . .

Under the influence of Bhaiyaji, famous and influential artists such as Bhaskarrao Bakhle, Abdul Karim Khan and Gauharjan began using the harmonium for their accompaniment. A prominent student of the first of these singers, Govindrao Tembe, became known for his harmonium solos. "I also played solos on stage quite often", confesses Dilip Chandra Vedi. He adds:

> But what is a harmonium? Anyone can touch the keys and produce sounds, whether he is an expert or a dilettante. Can a person without training play the sarangi? No, he cannot even handle the bow, and to play in tune requires a lot of effort. The harmonium is nothing—the person who plays it is everything. He who is knowledgeable about music will play very well. He who is not will play in a very pedestrian manner.

Gradually, the sarangi was replaced by the harmonium. First of all the second sarangi player was substituted. Later, when it became harder to find good sarangi accompanists, bowed instruments began to disappear from the concert stage altogether and the harmonium took over. In an effort to preserve the sarangi, All India Radio decided to ban the harmonium from the national broadcasting network. More than three decades later (in October 1970), All India Radio held a seminar on the harmonium, "to seriously review the question of its use in broadcasts of classical and light music."[169]

Several 'educated' musicians and scholars—sarangi players were notably absent—presented their views. Almost everyone agreed that though the harmonium had severe limitations, it could not be denied that "it [had] established itself as a popular instrument". "The maestros prefer the harmonium because its notes are flawless, unsagging and constant", said P. V. Subramaniam. "Amir Khan is so allergic to the sarangi, especially to its unmusical behaviour in fast tempo, that he does not allow it in his concerts."[170] V. H. Deshpande, a disciple of Govindrao Tembe, spoke about the advantages of harmonium accompaniment:

> What is the function of an accompanying instrument? I submit it is to create a musical atmosphere, and inspire the artiste by bringing him into his best singing mood. Further, the accompanying instrument must keep the continuity of singing to heighten the musicality of the performance and make it more attractive, more entertaining . . . by following the main artiste closely, with or without a little time-lag, and also at times [by playing] independently in the interludes . . . I dare say that the harmonium by its powerful, constant and sustained notes not only abundantly satisfies all these requirements but satisfies them in a far greater degree than any of the stringed instruments . . .[171]

In other words, the accompanist should be satisfied with inspiring the singer, and should keep the continuity by filling out the interludes. "Whatever the duties or desires of the accompanist," writes D. M. Neuman, "the rights of the soloist in performance are paramount with respect to all musical decisions."[172] Vocalists who used to recognize the accompanist as an artist of equal merit, and welcomed a lively and spontaneous interplay (*sangat*) between voice and instrument, seem (with a few exceptions) to have left the stage long ago.

"Sarangi is extolled as the most suitable instrument for accompaniment in preference to the harmonium," continued V. H. Deshpande. "It is meant essentially for female musicians and especially for light-classical varieties such as *thumris* and the like."

> The foremost of the hurdles in the way of a sarangi is the very virtue of its resonating strings, which are so many that they take [an] annoyingly long time [to be] tuned . . . And it is much more difficult to do so in an AIR studio in the few minutes just before the programme. It is next to impossible for the sarangi to change . . . scale in between two items, where every second wasted is a dead weight on the singer. Sarangi was perfectly all right in the spacious olden days of Kings and Queens and Sardars and Jagirdars, when before the select small audiences in the privacy of their chambers, there was no hurry about anything . . . the sarangi could then take as much time as it wanted to tune itself. But in modern times it is really an anachronism . . .[173]

Much of what was said about the sarangi at the seminar is debatable, and does not hold good for experienced artists with a total mastery over their instruments. Nonetheless, it reflects the fashion of today. The sarangi is *passé*. Together with the *vina* and *pakhawaj*, it has been relegated to the side-lines. "Do not the genuine Indian musical instruments of the old tradition", asked S. N. Ratanjankar, "which have the capacity to express genuine Indian thought and imagination, but which, unfortunately, are passing out of vogue simply because they demand a concentrated study and practice, deserve our attention?"[174] Can one really fathom the reason why such highly developed instruments, which took so many centuries to evolve, simply disappear? The reply to this question, I fear, is unavoidable: Who cares?

4.14 *Sarangi players become vocalists again*

Most certainly, musicologists in the 20th century have not cared about sarangi players, since literature on music virtually ignores them. The impression created is that being second-rate artists, they were only fit to accompany the miserable *kothewalis*. Yet on the contrary, as we shall see, many sarangi players were excellent instrumentalists, singers and composers, with such a profound knowledge of *raga* and composition that they could pose a threat to the vocalists they accompanied. In addition, they were the foremost teachers of female vocalists.

A noteworthy example is Ahmad Khan, who was a well-known sarangi player and a first-rate singer, and the teacher of Zohrabai of Agra (d. 1911). "He learned *dhrupad* and *dhamar* from Ghulam Abbas Khan, one of the stalwarts of the Agra *gharana*, and *khayal* from Mehbub Khan Darsapiya of Atrauli. It is said that Ahmad Khan taught Zohrabai like his own daughter. She became a versatile vocalist and was much praised by all. It was difficult for any woman singer to challenge Zohrabai because her singing was so impressive, so mature. But only those who really understood music could appreciate that style."[175]

In an article in *The Stage Lover*, written when Gauharjan (c. 1875-1930) was at the peak of her glory, we read that this popular singer was trained by a certain 'Kaloo Oustad' of Banaras.[176] In all likelihood this was Kallu Dhannu Dhari, who "plays sarangi and sings *khayal* very well," and to whom an earlier reference was made by Mohammad Karam Imam (1856). Gauharjan was the most celebrated, and perhaps also the wealthiest singer at the beginning of this century. She was appointed court musician in Darbhanga, Rampur and Mysore, and was one of the first Indian musicians to be recorded in the early days of the gramophone.[177]

Mukhtar Begum, the mother of Farida Khanum, was a well-known singer of Punjabi and light classical songs, and studied for many years under Fattuh Khan, a sarangi player from Chara (Amritsar district). According to D. C. Vedi, Mukhtar Begum's music strongly influenced Begum Akhtar of Faizabad (1914-1974). This popular artist also learned at first from a sarangi player, Imdad Khan of Patna, who was the accompanist of such celebrities as Gauharjan and Malkajan.[178]

Banaras, the nucleus of *Purab ang thumri*, produced a galaxy of excellent women singers.[179] It was here, at the beginning of this century, that Siyaji Maharaj, the Banarsi sarangi maestro, taught such famous vocalists as Rajeshwari Devi and Siddheshwari Devi (d. 1977). Rajeshwari also received her training from the sarangi player Ganesh Mishra, and Kashibai learned from his son, Sur Sahai Mishra. Indubala of Calcutta was trained by another member of the same family, Gauri Shankar Mishra and Rasulanbai (1902-1974) by yet another sarangi player from Banaras, Shammu Khan. Sarju Prasad Mishra is said to have taught many female vocalists as well.

Had musicologists displayed a deeper interest in the great women singers, the names of their ustads, the sarangi players, would also have been preserved. As it is, the importance of their role as teachers of practically all female singers, and many male vocalists as well, has been greatly underestimated. Credit should also go to them as founders of powerful *gharanas* and as inventors of new styles and even *ragas*.

PATIALA GHARANA—Little had changed since the 16th century when sarangi players first entered the field of classical music as singers. When their status and livelihood were threatened three centuries later, several sarangi players adopted a 'new' strategy by pursuing careers as vocalists. The first artist to show such foresight was Miyan Kalu of Patiala, a disciple of the learned *dhrupad* singer, Miyan Bahram Khan. It is known that Miyan Kalu taught his son and his nephew vocal music; they were the famous pair Aliya-Fattuh. These two also received some training from the versatile singer Gokhibai (also a disciple of Bahram Khan) who performed together with Miyan Kalu as accompanist. Since "the father was only a sarangi player," writes J. S. Jariwalla, "and as such was regarded as inferior, the musicians of the day did not treat the sons with respect, and did not allow them to sing at concerts along with other musicians. This naturally rankled in the minds of Gokhibai and Kalu Khan. The only remedy for this was to get Khansahib Bahram Khan of Ambeta to teach Aliya-Fattuh. . . Thereafter, the brothers got a chance to sing at concerts and their rise was so rapid that, in a short time, they even challenged Haddu-Hassu of Gwalior."[180]

Aliya-Fattuh, i.e. Ali Bakhsh 'Jernel' (General) and Fateh Ali, the founders of the Patiala *gharana,* were also taught by the great vocalist, Tanras Khan of Delhi. D. C. Vedi recalls that when he heard Ali Bakhsh in 1920, his *tanas* were still very clear, fast and in tune.

> Fateh Ali also had a very impressive and tuneful voice and was adept in light classical music as well. This is why his disciples, Kale Khan and Ali Bakhsh Kasurwala, were so well-known for their *thumris*.
>
> Ali Bakhsh of Kasur first learned music from his uncle Pir Bakhsh (a pupil of Tanras Khan), and was a very good singer and solo *esraj* player. He taught many professional songstresses and used to accompany Anwar Begum of Lahore. His son, Ghulam Ali Khan, played sarangi for many years, accompanying Anwarijan Dheruwali until 1935.

It is not generally known that Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (1901-1968), one of the most impressive singers of this century, began his musical career as a sarangi player, accompanying female vocalists. But the voice of the sarangi is clearly reflected in his *gayaki,* his perfect intonation and ornamentation, his powerful *tanas* which spanned three octaves, and most of all in the sweet and sensuous way he rendered his songs. As V. H. Deshpande puts it: "It has been said that vocal music succeeds to the extent it approaches the intonation of a stringed instrument. The proof was found in Ghulam Ali. . ."[181][103]

KIRANA GHARANA—Very few people remember (or care to be reminded) that both Abdul Karim Khan and Abdul Wahid Khan were sarangi players before they enriched the world with their wonderful singing. Yet their ancestors were mainly instrumentalists, who received a strict training in vocal music as well. One of them, Haider Bakhsh of Chaproli, a disciple of Bande Ali Khan, was one of the foremost sarangi maestros of the second half of the 19th century. It is said that after twelve years of rigorous practice and prayer at the tomb of his spiritual master, a voice suddenly emerged from the grave, asking him what he desired. After some hesitation, he replied:

> "Sir, let there be such power in my hands that whenever I play the sarangi, I play with such sweetness that people will have nothing but praise for me." And so it was done.[182]

He accompanied some of the greatest vocalists of the time, Tanras Khan, Umrao Khan, Haddu and Hassu Khan and Rahmat Khan. After serving at the court of Mysore (where he taught Abdul Karim Khan), Haider Bakhsh settled in Kolhapur, and played with Alladiya Khan. D. C. Vedi recalls: "He was very good in *vilambit laya* because he listened to many *binkars, dhrupadias* and *khayalias*. . . Haider Bakhsh was, in fact, responsible for founding the Kirana *gharana.*"

Rahman Bakhsh Khan of Jaipur, another well-known sarangi player, is remembered today as the teacher of Abdul Karim Khan (1872-1937).[104] "Rahman Bakhsh had specialized in three *ragas,* Sindhura, Asavari and Barva. He had a special talent—when he played Sindhura he could bring down the fever of a sick person. . . His son, Bashir Khan, followed the strange practice of covering his left hand with a piece of cloth while playing the sarangi, so that his colleagues could not fathom or copy his fingering technique."[183]

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The story of Abdul Karim Khan's fascinating life has been told many times and need not be repeated. Important to us are his humble beginnings. As a young man, he played the sarangi, amongst others with Tarabai Barodekar who later became his wife.

> After he had played with Faiz Mohammad Khan[?] in Baroda, the maharaja offered him *nazarana* which, however, he refused to accept, since the amount was only half that which the singer received. Naturally the maharaja was surprised and upset by Abdul Karim Khan's behaviour, and asked him: 'Why did you return my gift?' Khansahib replied: 'I am grateful for the respect you have shown me, but why should I accept less money when Faiz Mohammad and I have performed music of the same class?' 'Faiz Mohammad is my ustad', said the maharaja. 'Singers are always superior, so accompanists must necessarily be second in rank'. Upon which Abdul Karim Khan took his sarangi and threw it over the balcony. 'From now on I shall never touch this instrument again', said Khansahib, and, suiting his actions to his words, he embarked upon a career as a vocalist.

This dramatic anecdote was told to me by Niaz Ahmad Khan (one of the sons of Bashir Khan). Like so many singers descended from a family of sarangi players, he and his brother followed the example of Abdul Karim Khan, who set the trend of refusing to accept the inferior treatment meted out to accompanists. He preferred to sacrifice his sarangi rather than be humiliated. Vilayat Hussain Khan throws light on a related custom: "Sarangi players were not allowed to take the *tanpura* and sing... in one such *mehfil* a sarangi player, who sang very well, started singing... The *sabhapati* asked him to stop. He told him he would have to stop playing the sarangi. Only then would he be allowed to sing in all the *mehfils*. So he completely stopped playing the sarangi and started singing. After that he was praised by good vocalists and became famous."[184]

As a vocalist, Abdul Karim Khan won national renown. The impact of the sarangi on his style can be felt in the continuity of his notes, and the subtle way in which he handled them and made them resonate, but most of all in the dreamy and sorrowful *karuna rasa,* the predominant sentiment in which he used to sing. However, Wim van der Meer observes: "Practically all vocalists belonging to *gharanas* of sarangi players have a small and deficient knowledge of compositions... The solution [introduced] by Abdul Karim Khan was both simple and clever. Instead of devoting time and attention to the development of the composition, only the *mukhra* was retained in the *vilambit sthayi*... Secondly, the tempo was considerably slowed down, so that all the remaining time could be devoted to *barhata*. Precisely this *barhata* he based on Rahmet Khan's music."[185] Even his strongest critics, however, cannot deny that this great and visionary artist played a predominant role in Hindustani music of the present century. The Kirana *gharana* of Abdul Karim Khan and Abdul Wahid Khan evolved into one of the major schools of vocal music and has today perhaps the largest following.

Wahid Khan was the nephew and disciple of Haider Bakhsh of Chaproli, who also taught the famous singer Rajab Ali Khan of Dewas (1874-1959), and the sarangi player Ghulabbhai of Udaipur. (At the close of the last century, the latter was appointed to the Kala Bhavan of Maharaja Sayaji Rao III in Baroda.[186]) As a young sarangi player, Abdul Wahid Khan used to accompany Lilabai in Saharanpur. There, he continued his studies under Abban Khan (d. c. 1928), a knowledgeable sarangi player who had received training from Bande Ali Khan and is credited with establishing the *raga* Maru Bihag in its present form.[187] Both Maru Bihag and Patdip were popularized by the followers of the Kirana *gharana*.

Later Wahid Khan gave up the sarangi and became a vocalist. Although he broadcast regularly for All India Radio (Lahore), his music was too sober, too mathematical and too intricate to appeal to large audiences. He was the protagonist of a new style, characterized by a very slow and systematic evolution of the *raga* (giving emphasis to correct intonation), and a musician's musician. With these assets, he exerted an immense influence and had a large following. Wahid Khan was a demanding teacher, a traditionalist. He considered knowledge as sacred and to be made accessible only to those who truly deserved it. Apart from a few women singers (including Begum Akhtar), he mainly taught his relatives: Suresh Babu Mane and Hirabai Barodekar (children of Abdul Karim Khan), Roshanara Begum (daughter of Abdul Haq), the sarangi player Shakur Khan and various others.

The close association between vocal music and sarangi in this *gharana* is apparent from the decision of Abdul Wahid Khan's only son, Hafizullah Khan (born in 1946), to become a sarangi player instead of a vocalist. He was trained by his paternal uncle, Habib Khan. We shall also see how Ram Narayan, one of the few students of Wahid Khan who did not belong to his family, was able to benefit from the master's knowledge through the influence of Pandit Jiwan Lal Mattoo. There is little doubt that Ram Narayan's new *gayaki ang* for sarangi, a product of his creative genius, incorporating elements from various styles, has had a strong impact on modern sarangi-playing.

Although Amir Khan (1912-74) never received direct training from Wahid Khan, he was a most sincere follower, in that he popularized this particular slow and serene style of singing. Interestingly enough, Amir Khan also came from a traditional family of sarangi players from Indore.

> Amir Khan's father Shahmir Khan was a famous sarangi-expert, and even Amir Khan is fond of playing occasionally on the sarangi. The peculiarity of string instruments is that they are specially well-suited to *alapi;* fast *tan* passages on them sound discordant and jarring. String instrumentalists, therefore, usually prefer *alapi;* the *gharanas* pioneered by instrumentalists place greater accent on *alapi.* Use of *kans,* too, is easier on a string instrument. Amir Khan's style shows all the peculiarities associated with the string.[188]

Shahmir Khan and Anjanibai Malpekar (1883-1974) were disciples of Nazir Khan (d. 1919), a leading sarangi player in Bombay and a knowledgeable ustad, who joined, in 1885, the Gayan Uttejak Mandali, a Parsi music society, and became closely associated with Pandit V. N. Bhatkande.[189] Nazir Khan and his brothers Khadim Hussain and Chajju Khan founded the so-called Bhindibazar *gharana.* Aman Ali Khan, the son of Chajju Khan, was a well-known composer and teacher. Had Aman Ali lived longer, he would have been, according to Amir Khan, his *"confrère* in the world of music."[190]

To conclude, some of the most influential singers of this century are descended from families of sarangi players. It is remarkable that these artists not only sacrificed their sarangi in order to become vocalists, but also rejected it for accompaniment, preferring the harmonium. In contrast, singers from more traditional *gharanas* remained faithful to sarangi accompaniment, though they generally failed to recognize the sarangi player as a performer of equal status. A number of sarangi players began to revolt against this attitude, whilst others gradually lost their self-confidence. Following the example of Abdul Karim Khan, they either tried their luck as vocalists or advised their sons to stop playing the sarangi altogether.

Fortunately, not all sarangi players followed this 'modern' trend. Sarangi in hand, Azim Bakhsh, Mamman Khan, Bundu Khan, Gopal Mishra, Ram Narayan and various other artists fought against the injustice done to their instrument. To a large extent their efforts succeeded, and the sarangi came to be recognized as a solo instrument. Despite its unique qualities, however, the sarangi has not received total acceptance, and concert organizers seem reluctant to invite sarangi players to participate as soloists in music festivals. Furthermore, the number of sarangi accompanists is diminishing day by day. Does this mean that the sarangi will ultimately disappear from the stage? "I don't think the sarangi will perish completely", says Abdul Majid Khan's son, himself a singer. "But there is no future in sight and hardly anyone is encouraged to learn this extremely difficult instrument. Only those who are prepared to face hardships and a real challenge, or those who are looked after by others, can take up the sarangi. If you have to support a family it has become virtually impossible to earn sufficient money by playing the sarangi. . . When the sarangi is used in films, it is always shown with courtesans. The very idea of sarangi has become associated with courtesans and low moral standards, and this has stigmatized the whole community of sarangi players." Another singer finds fault with the sarangi players themselves: "It is really a shame that the sons of sarangi players have stopped playing this instrument. They should have been discouraged from singing and encouraged to continue playing, because other people will never take the trouble to learn the sarangi and practise for long hours."[191] Ram Narayan thinks that the government should make an effort to preserve the sarangi. He told me: "Something has to be done and fast, because if nothing happens before I die, this instrument will go with me. The government should provide me with a place where I can teach a few young students. It is not only music that needs to be taught, one also has to develop their temperament and approach. My students should be able to stay with me day and night, eat with me, talk to me and play with me. With such an education they can contribute something to continue the development of the sarangi."

5 FAMOUS SARANGI PLAYERS: WHAT MUSICIANS REMEMBER

5.1 *What defines a great sarangi player?*

Who were the great sarangi players of the last century-and-a-half? And why were they well-known? Whenever there has been an opportunity I have put this question to contemporary sarangi players, the sons and students of sarangi maestros of the past and, of course, vocalists. In the first stages of my research, as a sarangi student, I rarely made notes (following the established tradition of learning things by heart), and I never pressed a point when I felt the musicians did not want to discuss the issue.[1]

The obvious disadvantage of this method was that some of what the old musicians told me escaped my mind. The advantage was that I began to understand the meaning of oral tradition: whatever is important will always be remembered and whatever is redundant is soon forgotten. Another advantage (perhaps the greatest) was that I learned the music, and sarangi players began to trust me. Over the years, they came to realize that I was genuinely interested in their art and that I did not intend to 'steal' their knowledge for personal gain.

Returning to the original question: Who were the famous sarangi players and how can one make a distinction between maestros and ordinary musicians?[2] It is not an easy question because it requires a definition of 'famous' or 'great'. Everyone who has studied the history of Indian music knows that not all the great masters were equally famous, certainly not when India was divided into many kingdoms and states. Writing about the classical music of India in 1917, Coomaraswamy observed:

> It is the chamber-music of an aristocratic society, where the patron retains musicians for his own entertainment and for the pleasure of the circle of his friends; or it is temple music, where the musician is the servant of God. The public concert is unknown, and the livelihood of the artist does not depend upon his ability and will to amuse the crowd. . .[3]

Thus, musicians usually led a reclusive life, only performing for the king or *zamindar*, or in the temples, and only if their fame spread far and wide would they travel all over the country to other courts. In other words, fame was a relative concept and, in this case, rarely reached beyond circles of musicians and connoisseurs.

Sarangi players were the least-known of all musicians because they had to play 'second fiddle' and were usually overshadowed by vocalists. Yet, a number of sarangi players were admired, and they are remembered as great musicians. Great, because some of them had a tremendous knowledge of the traditional repertoire, whilst others were masters of the lighter genres. Others again were unchallenged accompanists or known for their solo performances. When sarangi players combined these qualities and also developed a personal style which had depth and appeal, even their arch-enemies (and there were many of them) could not but recognize them as great masters.

To my knowledge, at least, four veteran sarangi players have been unanimously acknowledged as maestros in this century: Mamman Khan, Bundu Khan, Gopal Mishra and Ram Narayan. There are many others, however, whose names turn up repeatedly in conversations with musicians, whether in Bombay, Poona, Delhi, Banaras or Calcutta. When I asked a renowned singer, one of the old-timers, who he considered the best sarangi player he had ever heard, he replied philosophically:

> It is hard to compare. One of them was the best in 1920, another in 1945, and a third one in 1965. They could not play the same *raga* at the same time, so it is difficult to say who was better. But Abdul Aziz Khan, Ashiq Hussain Khan, Abdul Majid Khan and Ahmadi Khan were really very good musicians and considered among the best. Mamman Khan, the ustad of Bundu Khan, was also an excellent sarangi player. He played mainly solo and had a great sense of intonation. . . These musicians also learned vocal music; that is why they were much better than ordinary sarangi players.[4]

Had sarangi players been properly recorded in this century, or their names at least mentioned in music literature, or on the record sleeves of famous vocal recordings, I would not have had to rely on the opinion of living musicians alone. As it is, I have to listen critically and judge for myself whether what I have been told represents the 'truth', or whether my informants have showered undue praise on their favourite musicians.

I have been fortunate to be in good company. Of the masters whom I have spent a great deal of time with, several were (and are) very experienced performers and authorities in their field. I rate particularly highly the opinion of senior vocalists who travelled all over the country. These vocalists have had the opportunity to perform with a variety of sarangi players, and those who intrigued them by their mastery have left a deep impression on their memory.

It is surprising how one sometimes finds vocalists who are reluctant to talk about sarangi players. Quite often they feel superior to them, and one gets the impression that a singer puts down a particular sarangi player because he was simply too good, too knowledgeable, or perhaps too self-confident. It should never be forgotten that singers and sarangi players were competing with each other, and that there existed a *jalousie de métier*. Singers were responsible for the idea that the sarangi does not have its own identity, its own repertoire or 'literature'.

> When sarangi players accompany vocalists, they imitate them and try to remember the good phrases and compositions. Then they practise these and give training to vocalists, especially professional songstresses. . . Most sarangi players, however, are unable to remember *antaras,* because an *antara* is repeated only once or twice, whereas a *sthayi* is repeated over and over again.[5]

Undoubtedly, most sarangi players gain knowledge and inspiration from accompanying great vocalists, and they remain very faithful to the ideals of *gayaki ang.* It is also true that many sarangi players do not pay attention to the full development of compositions. It would be a gross exaggeration, however, to state that everything sarangi players play is just a reflection of what singers sing. A good sarangi player is not only an instrumentalist but also a singer, and, therefore, has a deep understanding of the two main branches of Hindustani music. It is a unique musician indeed who can render an instrumental *alap* or *jor,* and a vocal *khayal, tarana, thumri* or *tappa* with equal mastery.

To understand this, one has to spend much time with expert sarangi players, some of whom exhibit considerable knowledge about their ancestors and colleagues. Information from sarangi players about other sarangi players may be biased, however. Particularly when they talk about successful colleagues, one should be on one's guard. When they praise family members, one should always take their opinion with a pinch of salt, unless other sources confirm their observations. Obviously, a sarangi player from Moradabad (or any other place for that matter) will tend to exaggerate the importance of a local celebrity who is known only in Moradabad and not elsewhere.[6]

It makes me sad to realize that I was born much too late to hear and meet some of the great sarangi players of this century, to be able to do justice to their music. Many questions about important players and particular styles of playing remain unanswered. India is a vast country and until recently each city and town had a number of sarangi players, great or small. The sarangi was by far the most prominent stringed instrument,and it is unavoidable that numerous artists who have made a mark in this field will have escaped my attention. Similarly, quite a few distinguished sarangi players whose names are known to me, will be left out of the discussion. Lack of space forces me to make a selection, and I can only apologize to contemporary sarangi players, or the offspring of well-known artists, who feel offended by my choice.

5.2 *Artists of the old school*

The most important region to produce a great number of sarangi players, over the last two centuries, was a large area in Uttar Pradesh and Haryana comprising a group of towns and cities surrounding Delhi. These included Sonipat, Panipat, Kirana, Saharanpur, Muzzafarnagar, Meerut, Moradabad, Bulandshahr, Jhajjar, etc. The professional musicians who lived in these towns were mainly Muslims, interrelated by marriage, and they belonged to the *dhadhi* (*dhari*) or *mirasi* community. "*Mirasis* were (and some still are) rural musicians whose speciality, aside from providing musical entertainment at major celebrations, was the maintaining of genealogies for their clients. Their urban counterparts who have entered the classical tradition . . . provide the vast majority of sarangi and *tabla* players in North India", writes Daniel M. Neuman.[7] Not only that, the *mirasi* families also provide (and have provided from the 19th century onwards) a vast number of vocalists, and we cannot but disagree with Neuman's hypothesis that *mirasis* were solely accompanists who were socially and musically separated from the soloists.

The Kirana and Patiala *gharanas* were, and still are, powerful vocal schools, and we will see that several other established families of sarangi players also claim that their ancestors were singers. If we take this claim seriously, it means that there was not only a transition from accompanist (sarangi player) to soloist (vocalist) during this and the last century, but also (although less common) from vocalist to sarangi player. This is not so surprising if we remember that sarangi players who originally settled down in urban centres were singers using their sarangi as accompaniment.

HAIDER BAKHSH—The line of sarangi players whose ancestors trace their origin to Sonipat and Panipat, probably produced the largest number of artists. Haider Bakhsh of Agra is always mentioned as the first sarangi player in that tradition.[8] With him, in fact, the oral tradition of sarangi-playing begins, and it is said that instead of pursuing a vocal career, as his ancestors did, he chose to dedicate his life to the sarangi. It seems that Haider Bakhsh was responsible for the sophisticated technique of playing the sarangi, and he was also the first source of inspiration behind 'modern' sarangi-playing, giving the instrument its 'classical' status. In other words, with him there begins a new (and probably the most important) phase in the development of sarangi-playing; a phase which corresponds to the evolution of the large, 'modern' sarangi, some time during the first half of the 19th century.

Haider Bakhsh was a contemporary of the famous vocalist Tanras Khan from Delhi, and, like this great singer, he was a court musician of the last Mughal Emperor, Bahadur Shah II. As the following story reveals, even Haddu and Hassu Khan, the matchless singers from Gwalior, had to admit that his sarangi-playing was superb.

> When Haider Bakhsh heard that these singers abused every sarangi player, and that no sarangi player had the courage to play with them, he headed for Gwalior. Instead of contacting the musicians' community upon arrival, he decided to stay at an inn, so as to remain anonymous, to have an opportunity to listen to the brothers and become familiar with their style.
>
> As soon as he felt sure that he could tackle them, he made his appearance in the community, introducing himself as the head (*khalifa*) of the Panipat school of music. As was the custom in those days, dinner was served, after which a recital took place where the host was the first performer. When the famous brothers were about to sing, Haider Bakhsh interrupted them, saying: 'Sirs, I wish to play with you.' Although they objected, making all kinds of grimaces and insinuations, the other musicians present reminded them that Haider Bakhsh was a guest and a well-known musician as well, and that he should be given a chance to play. When they finally agreed, Haider Bakhsh said that he would only play if he was allowed to sit between the two singers. Naturally, they objected to his unusual demand, but once again they were persuaded by the gathering to give in.
>
> It is told that as soon as Haider Bakhsh began to play, both the brothers stopped singing and began to listen attentively to the powerful music which emanated from his sarangi. After the recital was over, Haddu Khan exclaimed: 'All the others play sarangi, but you play saranga. You are the first one who has brought honour to this instrument.'[9]

Thus, the oral tradition credits Haider Bakhsh with playing such a powerful 'male' sarangi (i.e. 'saranga') that he was able to play solo and accompany the famous ustads, whereas the great majority of artists played their 'female' sarangi only with women singers.

MIRACH KHAN—Haider Bakhsh became known as the founder of a new tradition. The most legendary sarangi player of the latter half of the 19th century, however, was Mirach Khan, who got his nickname from playing the sarangi in a very 'spicy' and appealing way. He was known for possessing a lightning fingering technique and his ability to make the sarangi 'talk'. His fame was widespread, and D. C. Vedi remembers that his guru, Bhaskarrao Bakhle, and many other musicians of that generation often praised him. "The ruler by whom he was appointed court musician had so much respect for this artist that as a token of honour his sarangi was transported in a palanquin, carried by four persons."[10]

Mirach Khan was the foremost disciple of Haider Bakhsh, who was childless, and for many years he practised in front of his ustad, playing only scales and a few exercises. Bimala P. Chattopadhyaya, an octogenarian singer from Calcutta, related the following anecdote to me:

> Once an old sarangi player who was asked to accompany a well-known singer, visited Haider Bakhsh. He requested him to send a student to play *naghma* for support, upon which Haider Bakhsh told Mirach Khan to join the old musician. Whilst the performance progressed, it became obvious that the old sarangi player could not follow the complex *tanas* of the vocalist. Mirach Khan then decided to take the lead, unaware that Haider Bakhsh had secretly entered the room where the recital took place.
>
> When Mirach Khan returned home his master told him that he was surprised and pleased to hear that his disciple could accompany the singer as competently as he himself would have done. He was furious, however, that Mirach Khan had disobeyed his order that he should only play *naghma,* and, worse, had humiliated the old musician who was his senior. Haider Bakhsh was so outraged by these two offenses that he disowned Mirach Khan and sent him away.
>
> For seven years, it is said, Mirach Khan practised twelve hours a day. He could follow every vocalist and never missed a single note. . .

What really happened was that Haider Bakhsh's relatives had complained that he gave his knowledge and attention to an outsider of the *khandan*. Haider Bakhsh tried to pacify them by saying, "I have only given him two-and-a-half *paltas*", and added that his own family members were hardly as dedicated to the sarangi as Mirach Khan was. But the ustad finally had to yield to their pressure and request his favourite disciple to leave the house.[11]

On the fortieth day after the death of Haider Bakhsh a ceremony took place in Agra, where all his disciples and relatives gathered to appoint a new successor. As was the custom, the students played first. When Mirach Khan completed his recital, everyone was so impressed that no one, including Badal Khan (the nephew of Haider Bakhsh), had the courage to play after him. Naturally, Mirach Khan did not come forward to offer Badal Khan *nazarana,* and said: "Unless he can show the work of my master, how can I acknowledge him as his immediate successor?"

At the request of Badal Khan the ceremony was postponed for a year, during which Badal Khan practised so hard that when it took place again he was able to convince the senior musicians that he was the true successor of his master. "Even Mirach Khan offered him *nazarana,* recognizing him as the *khalifa*."[12] Mirach Khan, however, remained the most celebrated performer of this tradition and was even more well-known than his teacher. Sarangi players, amongst themselves and to their students, would cite him as the best example of a musician who was totally absorbed by his practice. "His fingers were always bent, day and night, as if he were playing", remembers an old sarangi player.[13] Mirach Khan died in Tonk (probably around the end of the 19th century), shortly after a performance with the singers, Aliya-Fattuh.

BADAL KHAN—Although Khalifa Badal Khan was one of the famous musical personalities of the past and, indisputably, a very good teacher, his greatness as a sarangi player is controversial.[14][105] Amongst his many students of vocal music, Girija Shankar Chakravarty was the most prominent.

Born in the 1830's, Badal Khan started learning *dhrupad* and *khayal* from his father(?), Miyan Change Khan. After his father's death he became a disciple of his uncle Haider Bakhsh from whom he learnt the sarangi. It is said that during the Mutiny (1857), both uncle and nephew were arrested and sentenced to death. Through the intercession of an influential person, they were saved.[15] Soon thereafter they settled in Agra, where Badal Khan fell under the spell of the Agra *gharana*. In the early 1900's, he moved to Calcutta where he "spent the latter part of his life . . . but he stopped playing the instrument after the death of his son."[16] Badal Khan was a court musician in Champanagar and died in the late 1930's, over a hundred years old. He was not only a versatile musician, but a good wrestler and sword fighter as well.

Among the other known disciples of Haider Bakhsh, Bunda Khan attained fame in Rampur. He was said to have such great control over his right hand that he was able to play both the *sthayi* and *antara* in a single bow stroke.[17]

BUNIAD HUSSAIN KHAN—There was another reputed artist of Rampur, Buniad Hussain, one of the few sarangi players whose name is found in literature. His father, Ali Bakhsh, was a renowned *hori* and *dhrupad* singer from Lahore, "whose fame was not only confined to northern India but also reached as far as Bengal where many of his pupils are still alive. He was a musician in the *durbar* of Rampur for 40 years during the time of His Highness Nawab Kalbe Ali Khan."[18]

After the death of his father, Buniad Hussain Khan began learning the sarangi and received further training from Amir Khan, father of the great *binkar*, Wazir Khan, and from the famous *rabab* and *sursringar* player, Bahadur Hussain Khan.

> Buniad Hussain rose to be one of the best *sarangee* players of India. He was a musician in the Rampur *durbar* for 45 years during the time of His Highness Nawab Mustak Ali Khan and for some time to his heir, His Highness Nawab Hamid Ali Khan, the present chief who received lessons in vocal music from him prior to his being a pupil of Woozir Khan.[19]

Buniad Hussain died in the beginning of the 20th century and was succeeded by his son, Mehdi Hussain Khan (born in 1883), who was a knowledgeable musician and a competent teacher. But he never attained much fame as a sarangi player. Besides learning from his father he received training from Nawab Sadat Ali Khan and also from Wazir Khan. H. K. Roy Chowdhury (1929) writes about him:

> At present he is under the service of Kumar Arun Chandra Singha of Paikpara, Calcutta. Sudhindra Chandra Chatterjee . . . Sir Chandra Nath Bose of Calcutta, and Girija Sankar Chakraborty of Calcutta are the most noteworthy of the pupils who have received lessons in vocal music from Mehdi Hussein. He is, indeed, a learned vocalist of Hindu music, having in stock not less than 200 *horis*, 200 *dhrupads* in all the three *banis* that are current, 1200 *kheyals*, 150 *toppas*, 100 *thumris* and numerous *dadra*, *gazal* and other types of songs. He is said to be possessed of such musical treasures as very few people have the fortune of knowing.[20]

ALLADIYA KHAN—"Although the art of sarangi playing began with Haider Bakhsh and the tradition was continued by Mirach Khan, Bunda Khan and Badal Khan, the credit for further developing this art should go to Alladiya Khan Birtuwala. He and his ustad, Maula Bakhsh Sage Sakrewala, were the real authorities of sarangi", explained a musician who has a deep understanding of the subject.[21] Little is known, unfortunately, about these great masters, except that Maula Bakhsh was patronized by the ruler of Mangrole State (Haryana), and that he was a very amiable person who treated his pupils like his children. For reasons unknown, he refused to teach Bundu Khan, who tried hard to persuade him, but to no avail.

Like his guru, Alladiya Khan from Jind(?) trained a vast number of sarangi players who disseminated his art throughout the country. Besides his sons, Abdul Aziz Khan and Habib Khan, mention should be made of Khadim Hussain Khan, Asharaf Khan, Faiyaz Khan, Fattuh Khan and Amir Bakhsh. Alladiya Khan also taught a number of women singers, amongst whom were the reputed sisters from Delhi, Chamia and Putli, and Idanbai Suratwali. Since he understood the weaker sides of sarangi players, he trained Idanbai in such a way that no artist was able to defeat her. Most of them were, in fact, afraid to play with her!

ABDUL AZIZ KHAN—Few people realize that Abdul Aziz Khan was a well-known sarangi player before he obtained fame as a *binkar*. According to D. C. Vedi, he was one of the greatest soloists at the beginning of this century. "Abdul Aziz had profound knowledge and learned many *khayals* and *dhrupads* from famous musicians. He played with Miyan Jan of Patiala, Bhaskarraoji and many other celebrities. He was a warm, broad-minded and very interesting man, and was liked by all. After I left my post in Patiala, Abdul Aziz Khan was appointed court musician

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there." Before that, he lived in Bombay where, amongst others, he used to play with the sisters Chamia and Putli, who were very rich and influential; and in the service of a wealthy Hindu *seth*.

> But after some time, there was a serious quarrel between Abdul Aziz and Chamia, who was better known as Shamshad Begum. She taunted and insulted him, after which he told his friends (I was also present): 'Now I will stop playing the sarangi; this instrument does not bring me any respect.' Then he put his sarangi in a bag and hung it on a peg. He did so despite the fact that he was a reputed sarangi player, both as a soloist and an accompanist, and he earned enough money. In no time, however, Abdul Aziz Khan became a leading *vichitra vina* player.

This was in 1920, after he had taken lessons from the renowned *binkar*, Jamaluddin Khan of Jaipur, and after he had practised the instrument for less than two years. "He gave his first performance at the annual music conference of the Gandharva Mahavidyalaya, where he played *raga* Puria. It was highly praised. In the art of *vichitra vina*-playing, he had no peer." Abdul Aziz Khan died in 1946 having made a number of 78 r.p.m. records, which give ample proof of his mastery.[22]

KHADIM HUSSAIN KHAN—Concerning Khadim Hussain Khan of Gudiani, another well-known disciple of Alladiya Khan Birtuwala, a musician said: "From 1953 to 1957 he used to visit our house daily and would always play his instrument. I have never heard such fabulous sarangi-playing and I have never met a person with such a profound training. Ahmad Jan Thirakwa used to say, "As far as the sarangi is concerned, he is the only person who knows how to play it." Even Bundu Khan and the great vocalist, Alladiya Khan, acknowledged his correct training and technique, and Abdul Aziz Khan would affectionately refer to him as the 'real' son of his father. Whatever he played he had learned from his guru."[23][106]

The last remark is revealing. It invalidates the general claim that the sarangi does (or did) not have its own material. A traditional musician like Khadim Hussain Khan adhered so strictly to the musical grammar of that material, that he could not even appreciate the music of Bundu Khan.

"Sarangi players are not usually recognized by others as being authorities on musical theory, although they themselves claim to be so," writes Daniel M. Neuman. Wim van der Meer also believes that sarangi players "have a small and deficient knowledge of compositions."[24] Apparently, the idea was conveyed to them by a vocalist. One wonders, however, to what kind of sarangi players they are referring. All the maestros who have been discussed so far had an impressive knowledge of the traditional repertoire and were, for that reason, acknowledged by others. Even a relatively unknown sarangi player such as Mehdi Hussain Khan possessed "such musical treasures as very few people have the fortune of knowing."

We should also remember that Pt. V. N. Bhatkhande, the most influential musicologist of this century, greatly benefitted from the information given to him by sarangi players such as Nazir Khan and Bundu Khan, musicians who were often more open-minded and generous with their knowledge than orthodox vocalists. To return to Khadim Hussain Khan, he rarely performed in public and always practised during the night. He taught no one, not even his sons, and died in 1959, taking to his grave a wealth of music which can never be unearthed.

ASHIQ HUSSAIN—There were many more well-known sarangi players belonging to this old school with its many branches, such as Game Khan of Sonipat, the brothers Asharaf, Musharaf and Sharif Khan, and Jhire Khan from Panipat.[25] The last great artist of this tradition, however, was Ashiq Hussain Panipatwala, a nephew and disciple of Asharaf Khan. "He was a wonderful sarangi player and very fond of the lighter styles," comments Ram Narayan. "Bade Ghulam Sabir was greatly influenced by this artist. That is what he told me." An old sarangi player recollects: "Ashiq Hussain used to play so sweetly, so much in tune that it was as if his hands were dipped in honey. His sarangi sounded like a buzzing bee."[26]

D. C. Vedi met Ashiq Hussain in 1933 when they performed together in Baroda. At that time, Ashiq Hussain was a court musician in Khairpur.

> I requested him to join me in Bombay when I was working as a music director and composer for the movies. Although he was against service, he accepted the job because he was pleased with my music. Every evening people came to listen to him, and he always compelled me to sing something. He was really a very good soloist and a wise man. I have never met a sarangiya with such a good nature. Ashiq Hussain was a true devotee of God, a very sober man who never drank. He did not even take *pan*. I will never forget him.

BADE GHULAM SABIR—In 1936, Ashiq Hussain was employed by All India Radio, Delhi. It was there that he left a deep impression on another famous sarangi player working for the radio, Bade Ghulam Sabir from Ambala (who was also known as Bade Sabri Khan)[27] [107]. Both artists were influenced by the Patiala *gharana* and both excelled in the lighter genres.

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CHICAGO

> Bundu Khan would admit that Ghulam Sabir was superior in *thumri,* and Bundu Khan's *thumri* was no mean stuff as you can tell from his Bhairavi recording. Ghulam Sabir was an extraordinary man. On Sundays he would go to the flea-market in Jama Masjid and buy medals and military uniforms. Like a young boy, he was fascinated by these things and he would wear them even while he was playing the sarangi. He was also very fond of Western movies, although he didn't speak a word of English.[28]

Ghulam Sabir was indeed a remarkable man. "He didn't even know the names of all the *ragas* he used to play, and was not at all bothered. Theory meant nothing to him. He began his musical career as a harmonium player, but when he was told that there was no longer any place for the harmonium,he switched over to the sarangi. Within a few months he started performing," narrates Ram Narayan, who became a close friend after he began working at All India Radio (Delhi) in 1947.

Although Ram Narayan is often critical, and sometimes even cynical when speaking of sarangi players, he opens up and smiles when Ghulam Sabir becomes the subject of conversation.

> He was really a fantastic sarangi player. Both his left- and right-hand techniques were very polished. He had an incredible way of handling the instrument, and one could hardly ever notice when he changed from one string to another. Everything went so smoothly, it sounded so clean, so much in tune.
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> Ghulam Sabir excelled everybody in accompaniment.[29] I never saw a sarangi player like him. He moved like a shadow. But he was temperamental. He chose whom he wanted to play with, and if he did not feel like accompanying a particular singer, he would simply refuse. He also did not like to attend music conferences and many times I asked him why. 'I don't like to sit with vocalists singing for two hours, repeating the same thing over and over again,' was his straightforward answer.
>
> In 1957 he was invited to participate in Brij Narayan's festival here in Bombay. He was supposed to play for eight days, each day with one or two singers, but he only accompanied Ghulam Ali Khan and Chand Khan, and also played for Shambu Maharaj. For at least 15 minutes he was only playing *naghma,* making a few variations, while Maharajji was standing there, signalling to him to continue. The audience was spellbound, it sounded so beautiful.

Ghulam Sabir was by temperament a retiring person who did not like to elbow his way to the top. For this reason he remained in the background, far away from the commercial world. He and Ram Narayan used to spend a lot of time together in the radio station, always talking about music, the sarangi, or playing for one another. Ghulam Sabir was extremely fond of *thumri,* always playing *ragas* such as Pahadi, Pilu, Bhairavi, Desh and Kamod. "His last concert was with Ghulam Ali Khan in 1960. He was already very sick and went to Lahore after that, where he died in 1962. I miss him very much," are the last but significant words Ram Narayan says about him.

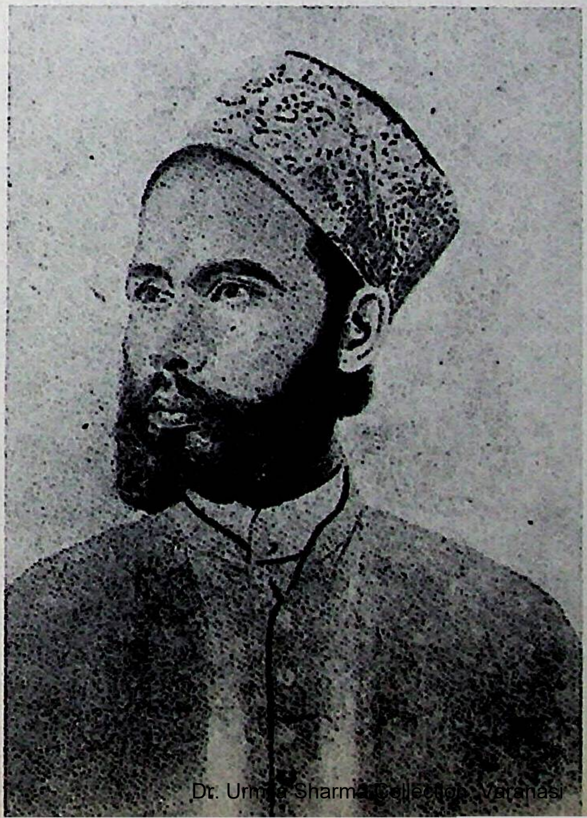
SHAKUR KHAN (1916-1975)—He was undoubtedly an excellent sarangi player, a good singer and a sincere man of deep knowledge. He was a recipient of the

Sangeet Natak Akademi award for Hindustani instrumental music in 1966, and was also honoured with the prestigious Padma Shri. As a soloist, however, he rarely left his audiences spellbound, and hardly ever performed outside the premises of All India Radio. Listening to his sarangi-playing, I always felt that his style was perhaps too complicated, too intellectual to appeal to the world at large. Nevertheless, there are now only a few sarangi players of the calibre of Shakur Khan.

5.3 *Bundu Khan and the Delhi gharana*

We have seen how artists belonging to the Panipat-Sonipat school contributed much to the general development of sarangi-playing in the 19th century. They and their colleagues from Kirana were acknowledged as leading authorities in the field, while sarangi players from Banaras earned respect for their mastery over *thumri* and *tappa*. With a few exceptions, these musicians were mainly known as accompanists and teachers, whereas Mamman Khan and particularly Bundu Khan also made history as soloists. Although the Delhi *gharana* of Mamman Khan (as it is usually referred to) seems to be an offshoot of a vocal *gharana,* and contains a relatively small number of sarangi players, the latter virtually dominated the sarangi scene for about three-quarters of a century.

According to the late Chand Khan, his grandfather Abdul Gani Khan was the son of a singer, Mohammad Bakhsh Khan, who was a court musician in Ballabgarh. After the Mutiny in Delhi (1857), several musicians (including Shadi Khan and Murad Khan) fled to Ballabgarh, expecting to find refuge with the family of Mohammad Bakhsh. They were, however, not treated with full respect since they were associated with sarangi players. Abdul Gani Khan revolted against this attitude, because amongst the musicians who had arrived was his father-in-law, Ghulam Hussain Khan (a noted sarangi player). The latter was related to the family of the great Miyan Achpal



Khan who was the teacher of Tanras Khan and Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Mughal Emperor. Abdul Gani felt that great injustice was being done to the sarangi and told his elders: "If you despise the sarangi and other instruments because they are used to accompany courtesans, why don't you look down on singing as well? After all, these instruments only accompany the women, whilst they themselves sing. I have decided that I shall play the sarangi until it acquires the status which it truly deserves." Abdul Gani Khan was disinherited and expelled from Ballabgarh. He went to Delhi where he became known as Sangi (Sarangi) Khan, and was recognized as one of the foremost sarangi players of his time.[30]

Sangi Khan had four sons: Mamman, Samman, Sugda and Kallu Khan. Three of them received a thorough training in sarangi and became successful artists.[31] But it was Mamman Khan (d. 1940) who inherited the spirit of his father and paved the way for the sarangi to be accepted as a solo instrument. [108] He was perhaps the first artist to play *khayal* or *gayaki ang* on the sarangi, and is also credited with the invention of the *sursagar*, a large sarangi with an additional number of steel strings, which are used as *chikari*. Mohammad Ali, the grandson of Kallu Khan, is the last surviving artist to play on this interesting blend of a bowed and plucked instrument.

In 1918 (?), according to D. C. Vedi, through the influence of Mahant Gajjar Singh (a fabulous *esraj* player who was the teacher of Maharaja Bhupender Singh), Mamman Khan was appointed court musician at Patiala, receiving a monthly salary of one hundred rupees. Vedi remembers that Mamman Khan used to accompany Gauharjan and often performed in Calcutta, where this famous singer lived. It seems that Mamman Khan was influenced by Ali Bakhsh of Patiala, the famous *sitar* player Imdad Khan, Chajju Khan of Bombay and various other artists.[32]

"Some people", writes vocalist Chand Khan, the son of Mamman Khan, "in a spirit of animosity and rivalry, have referred to the Delhi *gharana* as a sarangi *gharana*. They fail to realize, however, that by so doing they give it an additional status, because the sarangi has a history which dates back much further than that of *khayal gayaki*. . ."[33] He explains that his ancestors were distinguished vocalists and concludes: "Why then should singers from the Delhi *gharana* not have the right to claim that they belong to a *gharana*, simply because a few of them played the sarangi?" According to one of Neuman's informants, however, "Mamman Khan's ancestors five generations back came from Rajasthan, where they were folk musicians playing the folk sarangi, still found in the area. At the time of Mohammad Shah Rangile[?], Mamman Khan's great-grandfather abandoned the folk sarangi and adopted the 'modern' sarangi."[34]

It was Mamman Khan's nephew and son-in-law Bundu Khan, who finally raised the status of the sarangi to a solo instrument. [109] Gifted with an extraordinary imagination and an ability for total absorption in his music, Bundu Khan should be regarded as one of the greatest musicians of this century. However, "to say that Bundu Khan was a great musician is to state the obvious", remarks Rajesh Bahādur. "The sarangi was his instrument, not only literally but metaphorically as well. In his hands it became a many-splendoured 'saurangi'. Sometimes it was the *bin*, sometimes the *shehnai* or the human voice, and sometimes even *Kanhaiya ki bansuri* [Krishna's flute] as he used to call it. He really would have been just as great with any instrument. It just so happened that he was born to the sarangi."[35]

Dr. U[illegible]n, [illegible]ranasi

Rajesh Bahadur was a disciple of the maestro and got to know him very well, since Bundu Khan would frequently visit their house in Delhi. "Some of my earliest memories are of him playing the sarangi to a family gathering of parents, grandparents, assorted uncles and aunts, and some chosen outsiders as well. Every now and then someone would pull out a handkerchief to wipe his moist eyes. I knew, of course, instinctively rather than by analysis, that Bundu Khan's music had the power to make grown-ups cry. But I was a wicked little boy and used to insist on asking what was happening. I did not really understand then, but I do now. . ."[36]

Bundu Khan was born around 1880 in Old Delhi. His father, Ali Jan Khan, must have realized quite early that his son had an exceptional passion for the sarangi, because, even as a young child, he would tie a piece of cloth around a lamppost, pretending it was a songstress, and take two sticks, imagining they were a sarangi and a bow, and for hours he would sing, dance and play in the street.[37] Instead of continuing to teach the boy himself, Ali Jan took the wise decision to send him to the house of his father-in-law, Miyan Sangi Khan, where he seems to have received rigorous training from Mamman Khan.[38] With total dedication, Bundu Khan would practise day and night, listen to the music of his four maternal uncles and think of nothing but the sarangi. Later on he used to say that each of his uncles had a different approach to music, and that he had experimented with all their styles. "He also told us that he tried to reproduce whatever music made an impression on him. There was even a time when he tried to imitate the sound of the *ghunghrus*."[39]

Bundu Khan always strove for more knowledge and was ready to learn from anyone. "Once, he said that he wanted to learn a rare *bandish* from Kallan Khan, a sarangi player from Indore, who could not find a suitable bride for his son. Only on condition that Bundu Khan would get his son married, was he willing to part with the much-desired composition. And so it was done."[40] Bundu Khan seems to have learned a lot from Miyan Ahmad Shah, particularly the old *ragamalikas* and other 'chains' (*lariyan*) of *ragas* which were among his favourite pieces of music. Performing *raga* Bahar, for instance, he would often play one variety after another: Bilaval Bahar, Adana Bahar, Shahana Bahar, Gara Bahar, Jaijaiwanti Bahar, Bhairav Bahar, Bageshri Bahar and Suha Bahar.[41]

When Bundu Khan was in his twenties, he was only known amongst a small circle. In Delhi alone he had to compete with veteran players such as his guru, Mamman Khan, Alladiya Khan Birtuwala, Faiyaz Khan, Chunda Azim Bakhsh and Asharaf Khan. It seems that his genius was first recognized when he travelled with a female musician from Delhi to Indore where, every year at the time of *holi*, the Maharaja organized a grand music festival. Since they did not have proper accommodation and Bundu Khan had forever the urge to practise, he decided to sit on the pavement and play there and then with his eyes closed. His ecstatic music began to draw the attention of passers-by and soon hundreds of people gathered around him. Bundu Khan, however, oblivious of their presence, just continued to play. The news that a young, poorly-clad sarangi wizard from Delhi had come to Indore reached the court, and a messenger was sent to fetch him. It is said that upon hearing Bundu Khan, Tukoji Maharaj was so impressed that he immediately appointed him court musician.[42] It marked the beginning of a long and extremely successful career in which he would accompany the greatest singers of his time, imbibing their knowledge.

Bundu Khan writes of himself:

> In the Delhi Conference [of 1911] I played with the famous *alap* singers, the late Miyan Allabande Khan and Zakiruddin Khansahib. In the court of Kolhapur, in front of Shrimant Maharaj Holkar of Indore, I accompanied the famous vocalist Alladiya Khansahib. I also played with the distinguished royal singers from Delhi, Miyan Umrao Khansahib and Miyan Shabbur Khan. Others whom I accompanied were Miyan Bahadur Khansahib, Faiyaz Khansahib, who is employed by the court of Baroda, Baba Nasir Khansahib, the late Abdullah Khansahib, Vilayat Hussain Khansahib; the famous singer of Punjab and Lahore, Ali Bakhsh Khansahib, the late Kale Khansahib, Miyan Jan Khansahib, Karamat Khansahib of Jaipur; the sons of Miyan Rahman Bakhsh, Abdul Majid Khansahib and Abdul Haq Khan; Rajab Ali Khan of Malwa, Altaf Khansahib of Khurja, Bilas Khan, the well-known Kale Nazir Khan of Moradabad, Mustaq Hussain Khansahib, Bashir Khan of the Rampur *darbar*, Hafiz Khansahib, Mohammad Khan, Nasir Khan, Chand Khan, Ramzan Khan, Jimumulah Bakhsh Khansahib of Darbhanga, Mojuddin Khan and Bhaiya Ganpat Raoji of Calcutta, and so many others. In the courts of Indore and Rampur, I played sarangi [in competition] with *bin, sitar* and *rabab*. The Maharaja of Indore always preferred listening to my sarangi in this way.[43].

The *bin* and the *sitar* had made an impact on the music of Azim Bakhsh and Mamman Khan. Bundu Khan's music, particularly his *jhala*, was also influenced by these instruments. In other respects as well, he changed the technique and style of sarangi-playing, and in order to imitate the clear, sharp tone of the plucked instruments, he substituted the first string (*tip*) for a steel wire, and preferred to play solo on a small sarangi with only a few *tarabs*.[44] More important was the fact that a steel string would not disturb the flow of his *tanas*, "which were incredibly skilful and characteristic of his style. He had a name for all of them. Apart from the usual ones, *chut, sapat, gamak* and *gitkari*, he had a host of others. . . It was in his striving for the perfect *sapat tana* that he recognized and articulated the simple but fundamental principle that the *tana* should not be constructed so that the *pallat* [descending *palta*] is halting or clumsy, but that it should be free-flowing. For example, the *sargam* to him was not:

S R G M P D N Ṡ Ṡ N D P M G R S, but
S R G M P D N Ṡ N D P M G R S Ṇ, or
R G M P D N Ṡ Ṙ Ṡ N D P M G R S, or
Ṇ R G M D N Ṡ Ṙ Ṡ N D P M G R S, or even
P D N Ṡ Ṙ Ġ Ṙ Ṡ N D P M G R S N."[45]

He was so obsessed with clarity and simplicity that in *raga* Darbari, for instance, he would introduce a *sapat tana*—*Ṙ Ṡ N̲ P M R S N̲̣ S*—which strictly speaking belongs to Sarang. Accented in the correct way, however, it does not really destroy the character of Darbari but, rather, enhances it.

In Indore, Bundu Khan came into contact with Pandit V. N. Bhatkhande, under whose influence he published a small book (1934) which gives us an insight into his vast knowledge of compositions, genres and styles. [110, 111] He writes that he intended to publish *Sangit Vivek Darpan* in sixteen volumes, and gives a detailed account of what it would contain.[46] It is extremely unfortunate that this series was never published, perhaps because Bundu Khan was discouraged by the lack of response to his noble intention.[47] Had he completed his work it would today have greatly enhanced our knowledge of traditional music.

Bundu Khan also designed a new musical language and notation. To him the ascending scale of *raga* Malkosh was neither *Sa Ga Ma Dha Ni Ṡa*, nor *GaSa MaGa DhaMa NiDha ṠaNi Ṡa* but *Gas Mag Dham Nad Ṡan Ṡa*. It is obvious that such a notation has great advantages over the orthodox system which reveals next to nothing about note treatment and the way notes are linked to each other.[48]

> He devoted his life so unsparingly and so exclusively to music that he never understood the ways of the world . . . Even when he had fully established himself as a maestro he remained a compulsive player, prepared to lavish his treasures on anyone who would listen. . . And I must add, even those who would not. He had an innocent way of presuming that everyone and everything around him understood what he was playing. On one occasion he arrived some two hours before the appointed time for a small *baithak*. When the session was to begin he was nowhere to be found and frantic search parties went looking for him all over. He was finally located in a hedge of sweet pea in the garden. When asked what he was doing he said: 'It was Bahar, so I was playing for these flowers.'[49]

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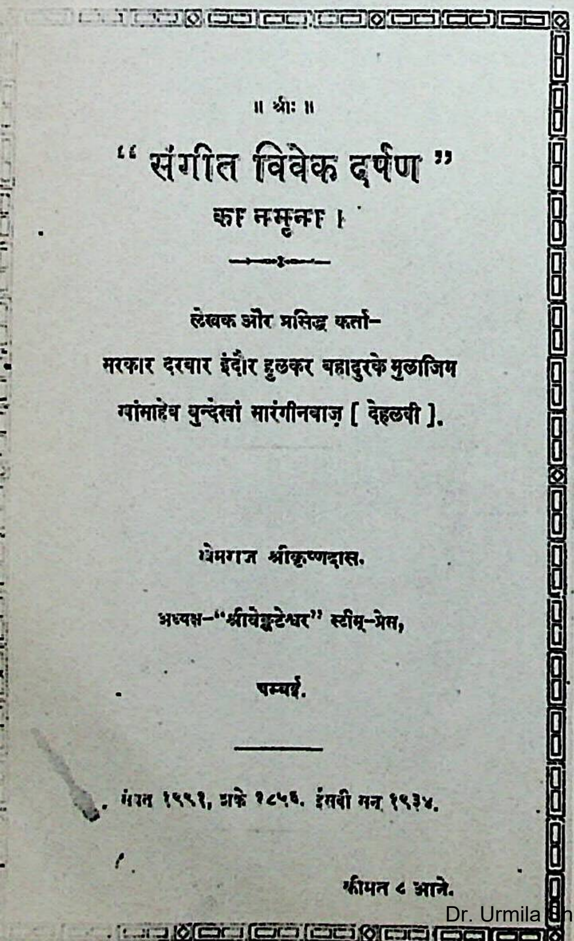

॥ श्रीः ॥

“ संगीत विवेक दर्पण ”

का नमूना ।

लेखक और प्रसिद्ध कर्ता–

सरकार दरबार इंदौर हुलकर बहादुरके मुलाजिम

खांसाहेब बुन्देखां सारंगीनवाज़ [देहलवी].

खेमराज श्रीकृष्णदास.

अध्यक्ष–“श्रीवेङ्कटेश्वर” स्टीम्–प्रेस,

बम्बई.

संवत १९९१, शके १८५६. इंसवी सन १९३४.

कीमत ८ आने.

111

"I relate these stories", continues R. Bahadur, "because Bundu Khan's music cannot be divorced from his personality. The fusion between the two is irrevocable and valid at all times. In his music this innocence and simplicity come through. He was never cynical, never self-conscious and even when he had arrived in the world of music, he had no false sense of dignity. He was prepared to learn from all and equally prepared to give to all. He would as happily play at the *ramlila* as in the grandest of grand conferences... There was something of the elfin about the personality of Bundu Khan. There was always a gentle, tolerant smile on his face which could become impish or devotional. I discovered to my cost, however, that he could be devastating when it came to really important things. I had been visiting him in Suiwala regularly for six months and had been trying to learn Darbari. One day he exploded and rapped his *gaz* [bow] sharply on my knuckles. He said that my *dhaivat* was not *komal* enough and there was nothing I could do about it, because, in his opinion, I had too much false pride, and that, without suffering and poverty in one's heart, one would never be able to find the right *dhaivat*, or for that matter, the right *gandhar*. Ustad Bundu Khan, too, was once scolded by his mentor, Ustad Mamman Khan, who said: 'Your *tana* in Bahar is like the neck of a pig which cannot turn. What is the use of this? You'd better go and sort it out.' Bundu Khan spent the next three years trying to correct this elusive defect... He said the fingers also had to have eyes which would enable them to look back... I asked him, what did your ustad say when you played Bahar for him again. He said, 'H'm ... yes.' "[50]

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Fortunately, quite a few recordings of Bundu Khan exist, although it should be remarked that the sound quality is often very poor.[52] They do give us, however, an impression of his versatile genius, of his ability to bring out the very essence of *ragas,* and of his infinite joy in playing. "In his play there is a continuous flow of powerful ideas, there is no groping, there are no pauses, no loose ends. His pot of music keeps spilling over. There was within him a sort of musical pressure which demanded an outlet, and he played as much to release himself as to please the audience. This persistent need was probably the reason why he could not contain himself and in several performances—and much to the chagrin of the organizers—he would start singing and talking hoarsely and unintelligibly..."[53]

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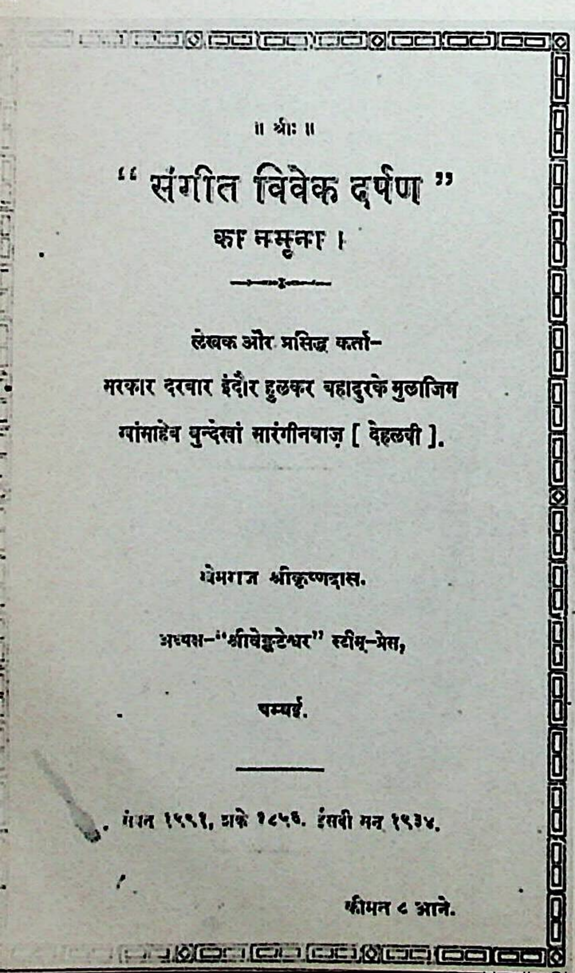

॥ श्रीः ॥

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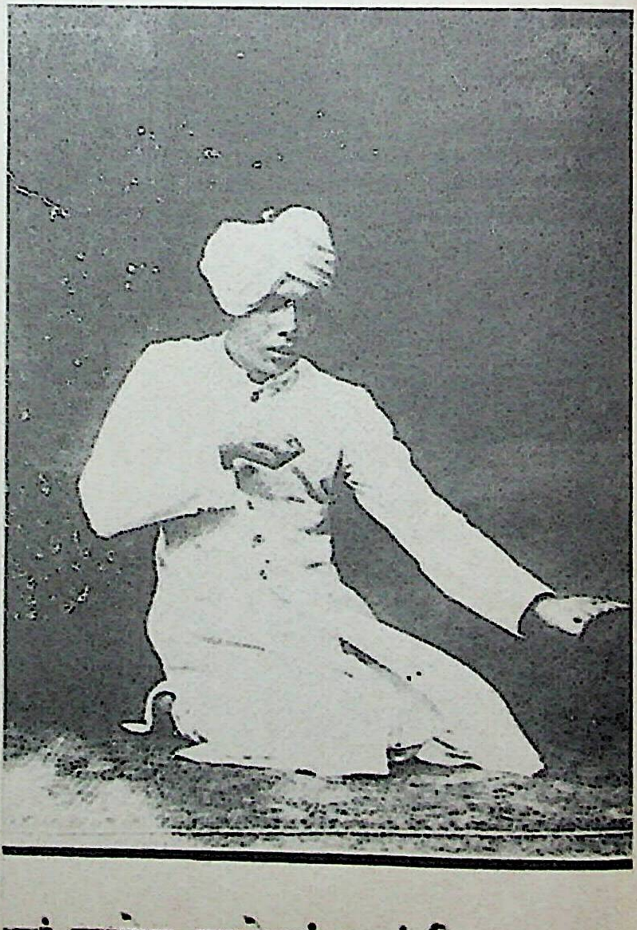
111



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My dear Shivraj Bahadur Sahib,
Thank you so much for the trouble you took to get me here.
Here are some *tanas* in Malkosh. . .
Yours sincerely,
Bundu Khan."[54]

Before he went, Bundu Khan made two commercial 78 r.p.m. records for HMV. They are among the most brilliant pieces of music that have ever been recorded, in spite of the fact that Bundu Khan was already in his late sixties and the fingers of his left hand were badly inflamed. Rajesh Bahadur comments: "The last piece is the most masculine, the most powerful conception of Bhairavi that I have ever come across. In just four-and-a-half minutes, he creates a garden in full bloom."[55]

The move to Pakistan virtually marked the end of Bundu Khan's active musical life, and seven years later, on January 13, 1955, he passed away in Liyaqatabad. His main disciples were the late Abdul Majid Khan, his nephew Nazar Mohammad (who died at a young age in 1950), his two sons, the late Umrao Bundu Khan (who seems to have been more under the influence of his maternal uncles, Chand and Usman Khan) and Buland Iqbal, Mohammad Sagiruddin Khan of Calcutta and various others.

5.4 *Banaras*

Thumri and its related song-types lead us eastwards to Banaras, which, according to Imam (1856), "is a centre where a style of singing, dancing and *bhav-batana* flourishes, a style most favoured by the present generation."[56] Banaras was also an important seat of sarangi-playing in the 19th century. Imam was full of praise for Jatan Kathak, who was a disciple of the revered vocalist and scholar, Babu Ram Sahai of Allahabad, and the regular accompanist of the great woman singer, Bi Rehmanbai.[57] It is not known whether this maestro had any noticeable descendants, but it is obvious that a majority of sarangi players living in Banaras, Lucknow and its surrounding towns (Faizabad, Sultanpur, Jaunpur, Mirzapur etc.) belonged to the Hindu *kathak* community. Like *dharis* or *mirasis*, the *kathak* families were interrelated by marriage. Unlike *mirasis*, however, they were socially respected. As Norvin Hein observes: "Ethnological manuals show that a *kathak* caste, usually dignified with a place among the lower orders of brahmans, is fairly well represented throughout eastern Uttar Pradesh. The traditional caste occupations are dancing (in which they are credited with superior artistry) and serving as teachers, managers, and musical accompanists of dancing-girls. . . The *kathak* remains, artistically as well as socially, superior and apart."[58]

From a social and also from a musical point of view, the Banarsi sarangi players form a more or less isolated group. They are, above all, specialists in the lighter genres, such as *thumri, tappa, kajri* and *chaiti*. The way they handle the instrument is quite different from what we have seen in other places, and the instruments themselves are usually smaller and narrower than the ones we find around Delhi.

SIYAJI MAHARAJ—When musicians talk about sarangi players from Banaras, three names stand out: Siyaji Maharaj, Shambu Nath Maharaj and Gopal Mishra. About the first musician, a music critic of the *Hindustan Standard* wrote: "Apart from instrumental playing, he used to sing numerous varieties of *dhrupad, khayal* and *thumri.* The closing period of his life was very tragic. He was incapacitated by a [crippling] disease. But even then he used to play the sarangi in a lying posture. Such was his love for the instrument that, according to his wish, the sarangi he played was placed on his body when he died."[59] Siyaji was the son of a well-known vocalist, Shyamcharan Mishra, and indeed, one of the respected masters of his time. He taught many famous women singers, including Rajeshwari, Vidhyadhari and Kamaleshwari Devi, Kashibai, Badi Motibai, Choti Motibai and last, but not least, Siddheshwari Devi. Siddheshwari said about her teacher:

> No one could possibly get a more generous and affectionate guru. Having no children of his own, he treated me like his own daughter. He taught me all the basic *ragas,* and a large number of *khayals, tappas* and *taranas.* He taught me with all his heart, and I practised my music with intense concentration and devotion.[60]

Siyaji was unchallengeable in *thumri* and *tappa ang.* Musicians say that all sarangi players who listened to his wonderful music, including Mamman Khan and Bundu Khan, "became silent and admitted that no one else could play *tappa* like him."[61]

SHAMBU NATH MISHRA—There was an important family of sarangi players in Banaras who trace their origin to Mirzapur. The most prominent artist of this lineage, Shambu Nath Mishra (the youngest son of Ram Narayan Mishra), was a contemporary of Zohrabai. It is said that he spent the first part of his life in Patna where he became one of the favourite accompanists of this great woman singer. It is also told (but difficult to verify) that he played together with Mamman Khan in Calcutta, and that in Poona there was a musical contest between Mirach Khan and Shambu Nath. When the latter began playing *tappa,* Mirach Khan was unable to follow his complex melodic patterns, and had to accept defeat.[62]

Later in life, Shambu Nath settled in Kabir Choura, the age-old Banarsi colony of musicians and dancers, where he was considered one of the great music masters. Besides being a sarangi player and a vocalist, he was a good poet and played *dholak, bansuri, sitar* and *esraj* as well. He was also known as a wrestler. Such were the qualifications of the musicians of India's past!

Unlike his father, Sarju Prasad Mishra (who died in 1944) stayed mainly in Banaras. Although he was a distinguished artist and a dedicated teacher of many women singers, an old musician told me, "he was not as good a sarangi player as Siyaji."[63] Sarju's third son, Baij Nath Mishra (born in 1915), is also recognized as a knowledgeable master of sarangi and vocal music, but has, in spite of that, remained in the background.

GOPAL MISHRA—Another Banarsi sarangi player, whose name was known all over India, Gopal Mishra (1920-77), was as versatile an accompanist as a soloist. [112] Many stories are told about his eccentric nature. But what matters most is that whenever he played, he was able to touch the people with his profound music, and bring forth the very soul of the sarangi.

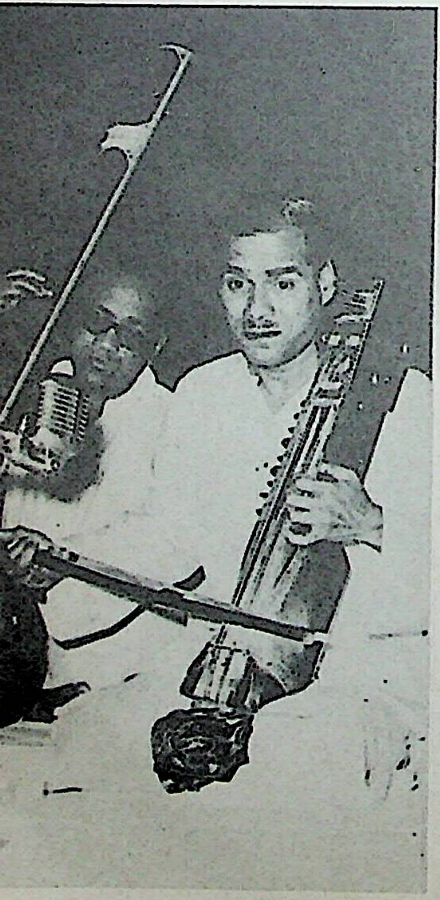
Ram Narayan recalls memories of a time when Gopal Mishra and he played together with Onkar Nath Thakur:

> Gopal Mishra was a very good and talented sarangi player and a fine man. He did not have any preconceived ideas about the sarangi and would do

> whatever suited him, playing any note with any finger... He was a very successful performer and played everywhere with everyone.
>
> He had a remarkable sense of rhythm and was known for playing fast and complex rhythmical patterns with his bow. Once he had to play *naghma* for a mridangist, but when he came on stage, he was intoxicated. My brother, Chatur Lal, and I were present. When Gopal began playing the *naghma* in *dhamar tala,* he led the rhythm with his bow. The drummer was really in trouble and the listeners became upset, saying that Gopal disturbed the performance. The contrary was true; what he did was fabulous. He played a perfect and powerful *naghma,* and my brother understood what he was trying to demonstrate... Gopal Mishra used to put singers and *tabla* players in their place. That was wonderful.

He was indeed one of the last sarangi virtuosos who could command respect for the instrument at a time when it was already doomed. His development of *raga* was individualistic and emphasized startling and unusual note combinations. He was a master of the rhythmical use of the bow (*détaché* bowing) and known for his *sargam tanas* and *tihais*. Whereas other instrumentalists of much less stature acquired national and international fame, Gopal Mishra remained a musicians' musician. Not a single record album of this maestro has been brought out, but the few recordings which survive demonstrate his mastery.

The musical ancestors of Gopal Mishra came from Balrampur State. All we know is that his great-great-grandfather, Ram Bakhshji, was the first to settle in



Banaras. His two sons, Shitalji and Ganeshji (who still played on a small sarangi and died at the beginning of this century) were two of the most prominent sarangi players of Banaras. It is said that Shitalji Mishra once played in the house of Gauharjan in Calcutta, after which Mamman Khan praised his splendid performance, recognizing him as one of the great maestros of the time.[64] Shitalji remained in Calcutta, where his son Gauri Shankar Mishra taught the well-known songstress, Indubala.

Ganeshji's son, Sur Sahai Mishra, was a contemporary of Siyaji Maharaj. Like the latter, he was a distinguished sarangi player and a good singer who had many disciples. Both his sons, Hanuman Prasad and Gopal Mishra, were first trained by him. Later they were sent to the well-known scholar-musician, Bade Ramdas Mishra, to complete their musical education. For many years, Gopal Mishra (together with the *tabla* player Anoki Lal) was the favourite accompanist of Onkar Nath Thakur. It was partly under the influence of this magical singer that his music developed into a fascinating sequence of emotional colours, which was also characteristic of the personality of this complex, but sensitive man.

In Kabir Choura, today, lives his elder brother, Hanuman Prasad Mishra (born in 1914), one of the last grand old men of the Banarsi sarangi. [113] He is a gentle and peaceful man who, unlike his illustrious brother, rarely made headlines, but has earned respect. A man with a sound musical knowledge who accompanied many well-known singers, he preferred to cultivate his art in Banaras.

5.5 *An important musical family from Jhajjar*

There were many other sarangi players, or whole families of sarangi players, who made important contributions to the advancement of the art. The lineage (*khandan*) from Jhajjar, a small town close to Delhi, deserves special attention. Over a period of at least two centuries, it produced a large number of accomplished accompanists who were known all over Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Maharashtra. Azim Bakhsh and Abdul Majid Khan were doubtless the most noteworthy artists, but when one takes a close look at the family tree, one becomes aware of how many more distinguished sarangi players this family generated.

The first prominent musician of this *khandan,* Ramzan Khan, earned a name as a sarangi player and a vocalist. He was the son of Karim Bakhsh, and the grandson of Manguwa Khan, who must have lived around the turn of the 19th century. But nobody in the family today remembers anything about him, except that he was a sarangi player who lived in Jhajjar.

Ramzan Khan lived until 1897 and heads the first large branch of the tree. (The other two branches descend from his brother Jivana Khan and their paternal uncle, Piran Khan). He learned mainly from Lal Khan, a musician of Panipat, who was his wife's brother. His eldest son, Masit Khan, was also a good sarangi player; but his youngest son, Haider Khan, remained unknown. Their offspring consisted mainly of daughters and the lineage of Ramzan Khan discontinued.

AZIM BAKHSH—The next prominent musician, Azim Bakhsh (who died sometime between 1902 and 1908) was definitely one of the foremost sarangi players of the time. He was the eldest son of Jivana Khan (who was still playing on a small sarangi, a so-called *tota*) but received most of his training from Ramzan Khan. Anjanibai Malpekar recalls:

> You can say that Azim Khan Bakhsh was almost like my right hand! He only had to tune the strings and start bowing, and the *svaras* would flow from the singer's mouth. Truly, I have never seen nor heard a sarangiya with such a magical touch.[65]

Although Azim Bakhsh spent most of his life in Indore, he was also known in Delhi and Bombay, where he played with the legendary Bablibai of Goa and many other famous vocalists.

> Ramzan Khan and Azim Bakhsh were the first of our ancestors who settled in Bombay. Before that, they walked from Indore to Delhi, stopping in each place along the way to earn enough money to continue their travels.[66]

It is said that, as a young man, he practised in a stable for many years. "Although the *baijis* would usually feed their musicians, they could not provide them with living quarters. He would tie up his long hair with a string, and attach the end of the string to a beam so as to stay awake."[67] Throughout his life he continued this severe practice.

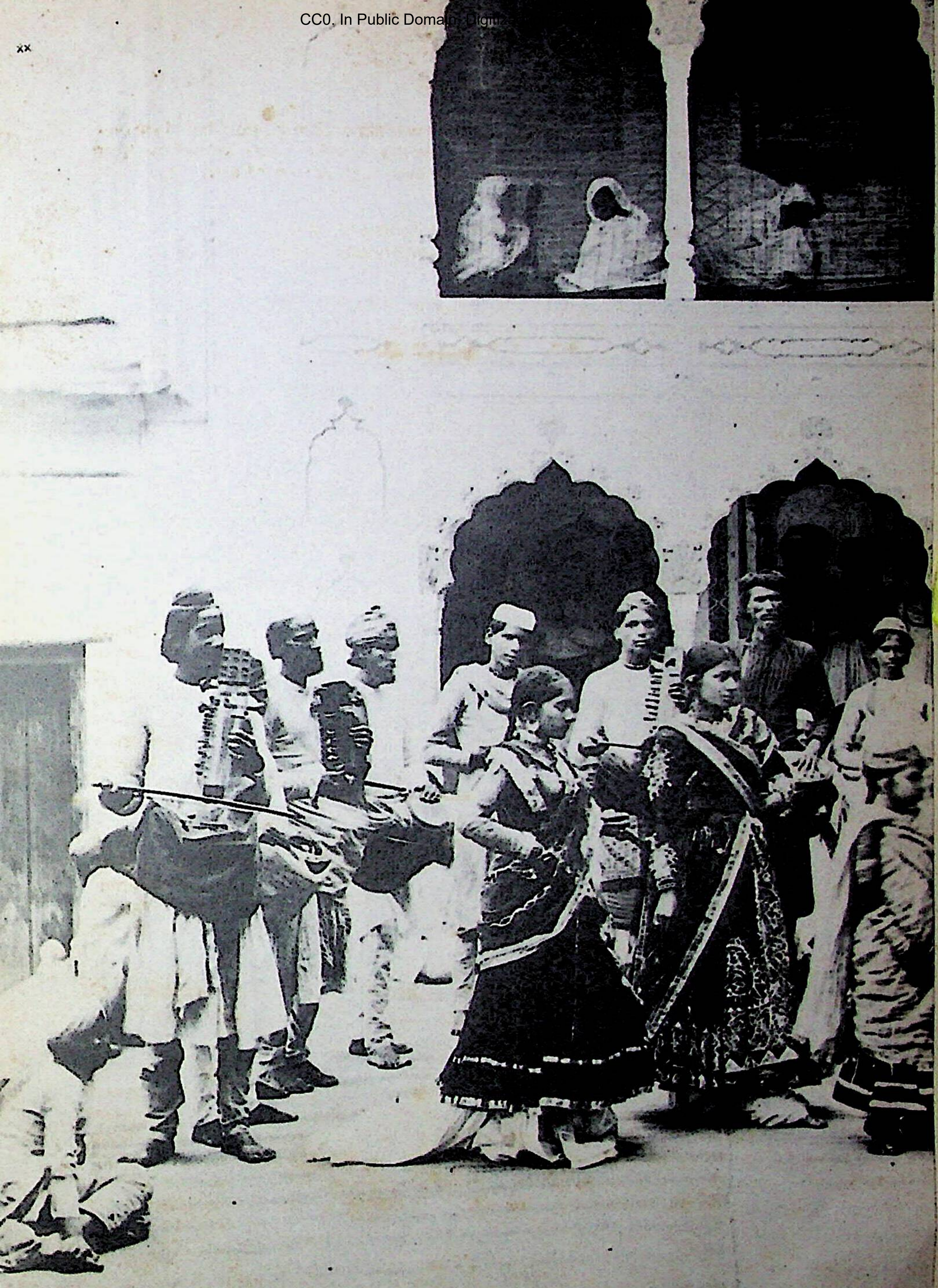
> With each meal he consumed a quarter of a kilo of pure *ghee*. Then he would smoke his *hookah* and around ten p.m. he began to practise, mainly *paltas* at a very slow pace. He continued until very early in the morning, and the people who came to listen to him could not tear themselves away from the beautiful music until he laid down his bow.[68]

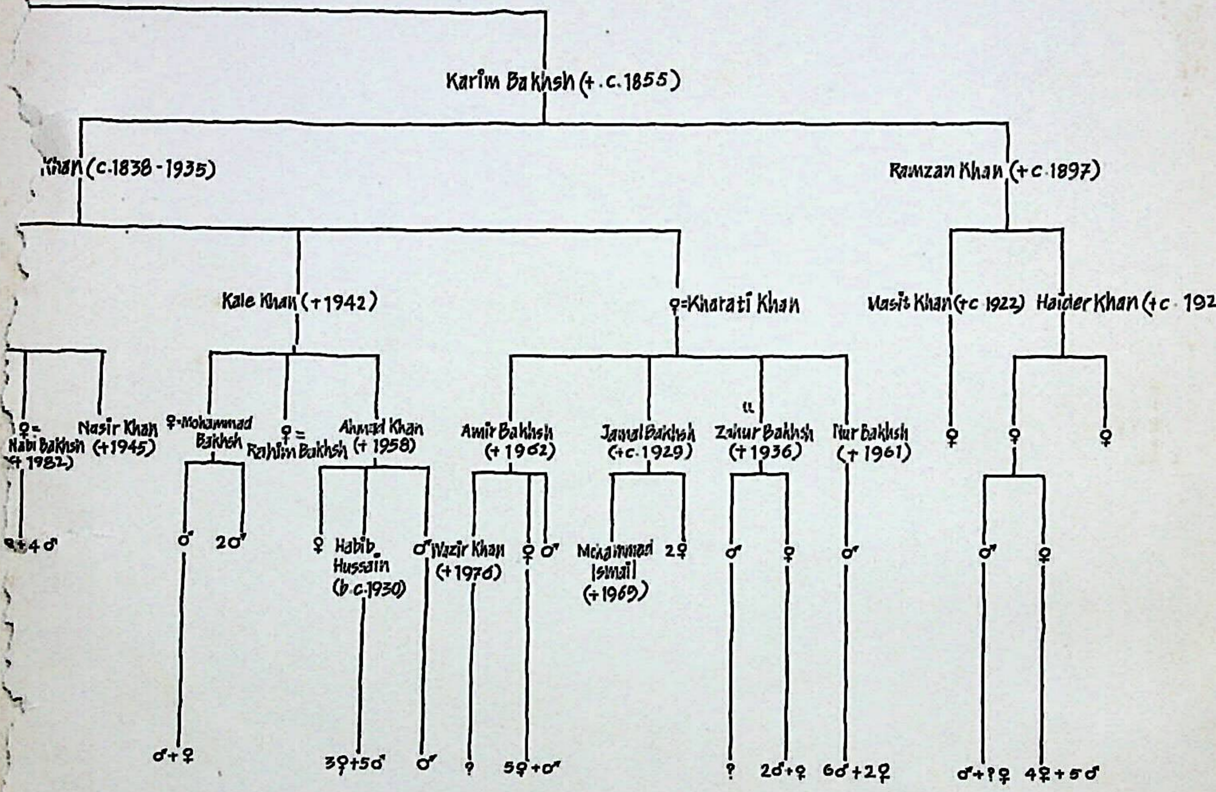
Azim Bakhsh was a very tall man who played on a huge sarangi. The first string (tuned to the highest pitch) was as thick as the lowest string (*kharaj*) of a common sarangi. "Imagine what strength he must have had. Nobody after him was able to handle his instrument. Like Haider Bakhsh Firishtiwala, he was famous for playing *jor ang* and could work up to an incredible speed with his bowing hand. . . In *jor* there is *gamak*, but there are no *tanas*. It came from the *vina* and was the original style of sarangi-playing. Later, when sarangiyas began to accompany *khayal* singers, they specialized in *gayaki ang*. This was a natural development, since it was required of them," tells his grandson Mohammad Hussain Khan.[69]

KHADIR BAKHSH—As the teacher of most of the heirs, Azim Bakhsh occupies the prime position in this *khandan*. His second son, Khadir Bakhsh 'Mulahji' (c. 1880-1934), received the most thorough kind of training.[114] Sometimes he had to suffer for it. "When he did not play exactly what his father had taught him, Azim Bakhsh would give him a severe beating, as he was a perfectionist and a strict disciplinarian."[70]

Khadir Bakhsh became known all over Maharashtra as the accompanist of Bal Gandharva (1888-1967), the idol of the Marathi stage whose popularity as an actor and singer was unparalleled.

> The velvet curtain, gold embroidered carpets, gorgeous costumes, ornaments and the lavish sets designed by Baburao Painter, all combined to create an atmosphere of luxury. Keshavrao Kamble and Kadar Bakhsh provided the accompaniment [on] the organ and sarangi, while Khan Ahmedjan Thirakawa played on the *tabla*. Whether it was the onslaught of musical excellence with which Vinayakrao Patwardhan and Krishna Master treated the audience, or whether it was Bal Gandharva, his




Karim Bakhsh (+ c.1855)
Khan (c.1838 - 1935)
Ramzan Khan (+ c.1897)
Kale Khan (+1942)
♀=Kharati Khan
Wasit Khan (+c 1922)
Haider Khan (+c 192
♀=
Nabi Bakhsh
(+ 1982)
Nasir Khan
(+1945)
♀=Mohammad
Bakhsh
♀=
Rahim Bakhsh
Ahmad Khan
(+ 1958)
Amir Bakhsh
(+ 1962)
Jamal Bakhsh
(+c.1929)
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Zahur Bakhsh
(+ 1936)
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Hussain
(b.c.1930)
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Wazir Khan
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Mohammad
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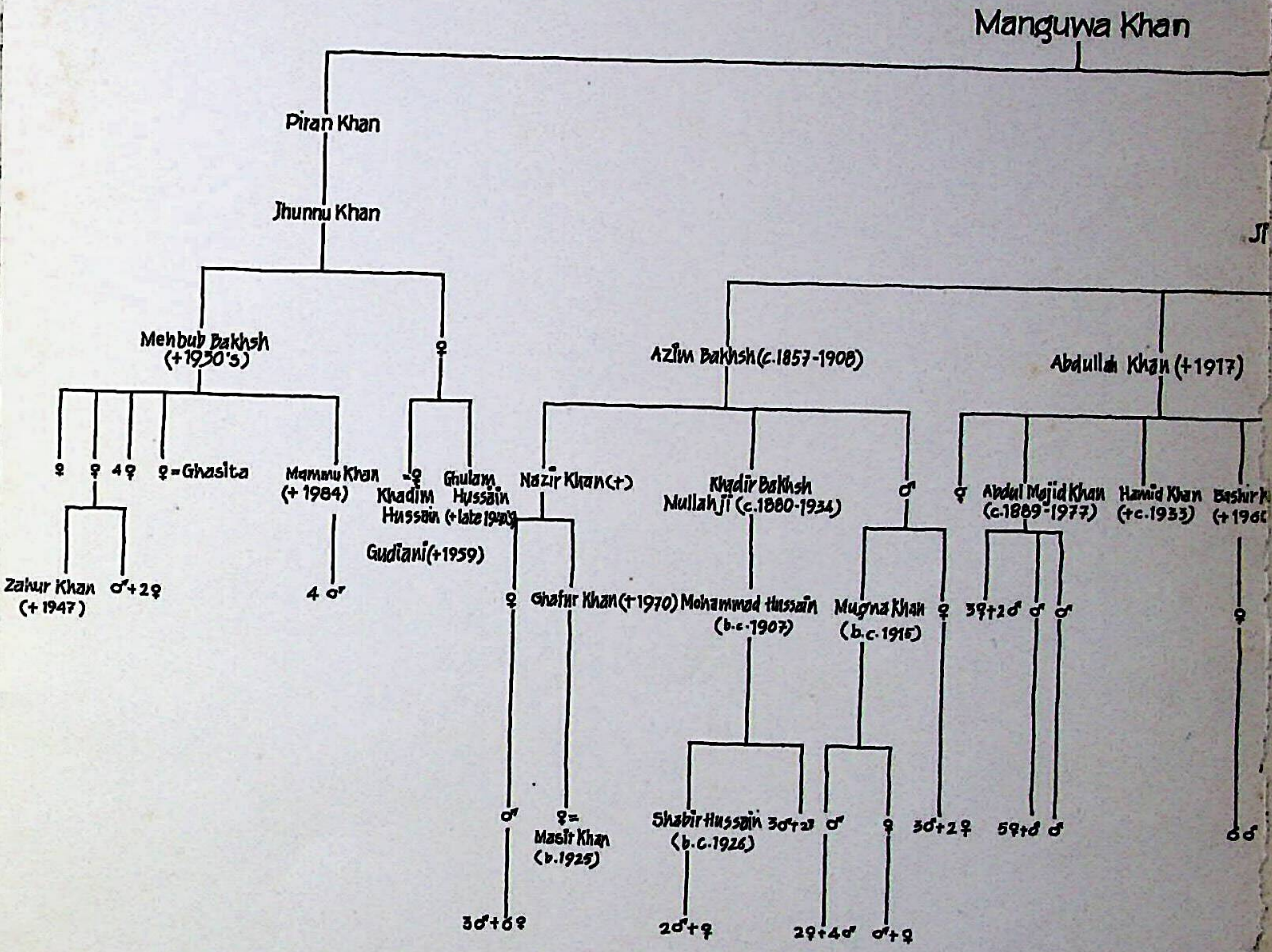
Manguwa Khan
Piran Khan
Jhunnu Khan
Jh
Mehbub Bakhsh (+1930's)
♀
Azim Bakhsh (c.1857-1908)
Abdullah Khan (+1917)
♀
♀
4♀
♀=Ghasita
Mammu Khan (+1984)
=♀ Khadim Hussain (+late 1940's)
Ghulam Hussain
Gudiani (+1959)
Nazir Khan (+)
Khadir Bakhsh Mullahji (c.1880-1934)
♂
♀
Abdul Majid Khan (c.1889-1977)
Hamid Khan (+c.1933)
Bashir K (+1960
Zahur Khan (+1947)
♂+2♀
4♂
♀
Ghafur Khan (+1970)
Mohammad Hussain (b.c.1907)
Mugna Khan (b.c.1915)
♀
3♀+2♂
♂
♂
♀
♂
♀= Masit Khan (b.1925)
Shabir Hussain (b.c.1926)
3♂+2♀
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> golden voice beautifully blended with the accompanying instruments—the result was a musical ecstasy never experienced before. Alladiya Khan Saheb used to say that whenever he felt like music, he would find his way to Bal Gandharva's plays. No wonder the music-loving, common man—be he Marathi, Gujarati or South Indian, was completely hypnotised by the golden voice.[71]

Bal Gandharva's first ustad, Mehbub Bakhsh, also belonged to the Jhajjar *khandan.*[116] It was the great Bhaskarrao Bakhle, however, whose "essential contribution lay in developing fully Bal Gandharva's uncommonly sweet voice to serve the needs of the stage and in bringing classical music within the easy grasp of the ordinary theatregoer."[72]

For years, Khadir Bakhsh travelled with the Gandharva Natak Company. From 1928 onwards, he and the legendary *tabla* player, Ahmad Jan Thirakwa, kept audiences spellbound for hours with their *jugalbandis*. "He played popular stage songs which the people knew. On the basis of these songs he would develop the *ragas* . . . Old people who heard him play so many years ago, remember him even now."[73]

MOHAMMAD HUSSAIN KHAN—"In every respect, Khadir Bakhsh was a sober person, and a very pious man. This is why he was known as Mulahji. Some of his views I have inherited," says his son who presently is the senior-most artist of the Jhajjar *khandan.*[74][115]

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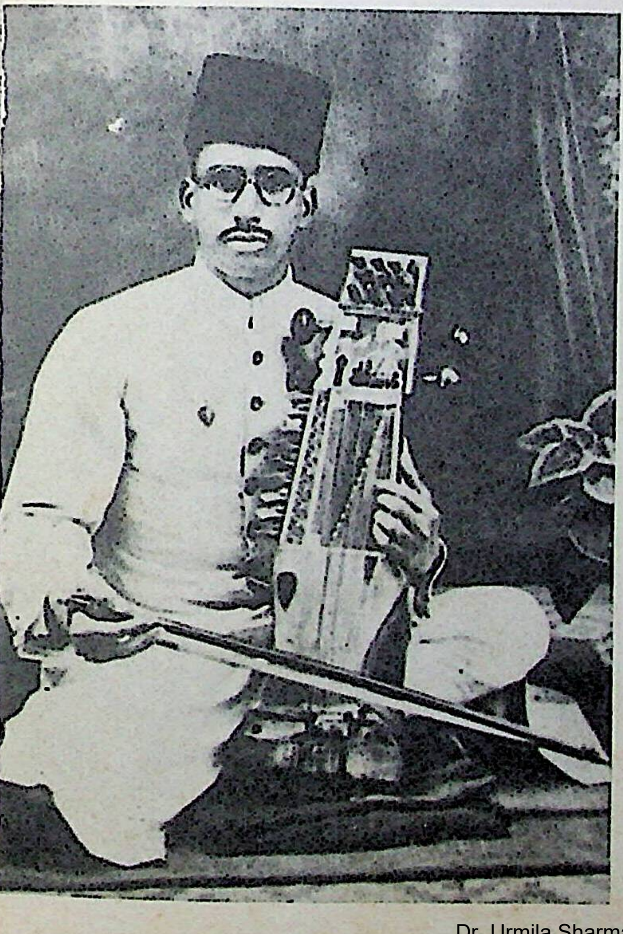

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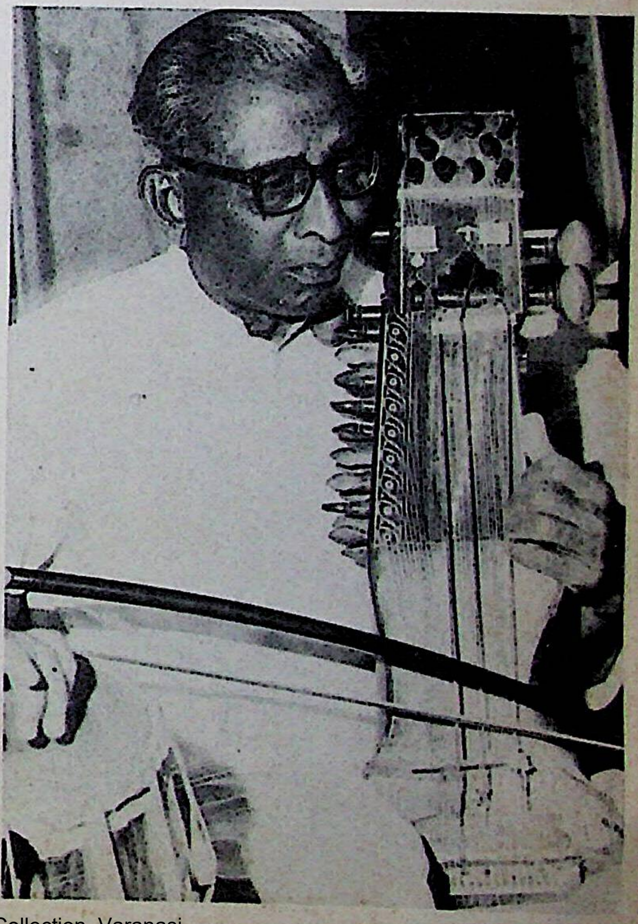
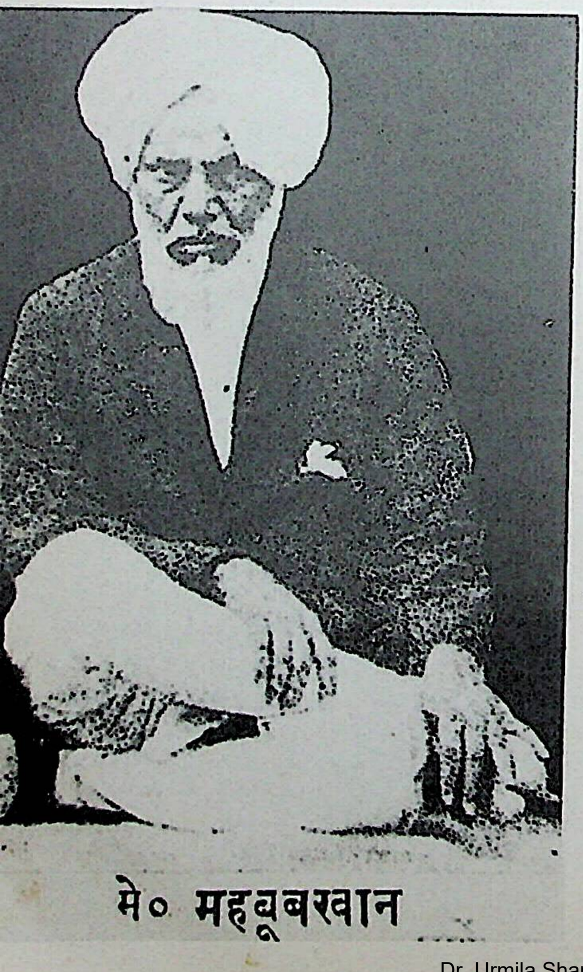
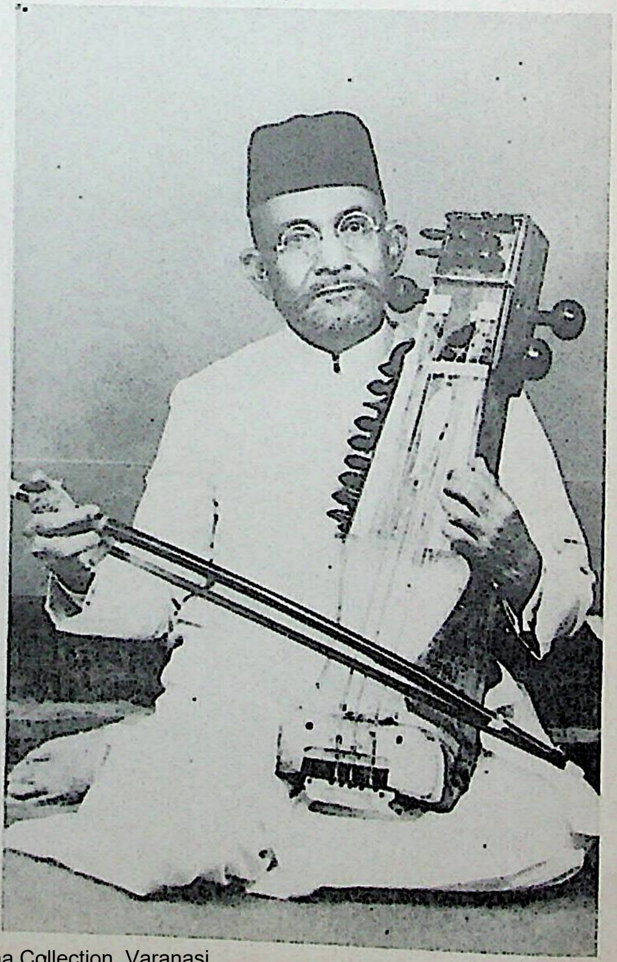


Mohammad Hussain Khan of Poona (born c. 1907) is indeed one of the most amiable and open-minded sarangi players I have encountered. A quiet man who has followed in the footsteps of his father, he radiates authority. When I met him recently in the 'Arun Music Class', where he teaches his vocal students, he disclosed without pride that he had played with many famous vocalists of his generation, and that he became a disciple of the reputed ustad, Aman Ali Khan.

After the death of his father in 1934, Mohammad Hussain joined the Gandharva Natak Company, but six years later he decided to leave the world of theatre and founded his own music school. Since then he has been a dedicated teacher, one of the most respected musical personalities of Poona. He has written two books on the subject and also created two *ragas*. I asked him why he finally gave up the sarangi:

> The time and effort it takes to learn this instrument are out of proportion to what one gets in return. What a singer can learn in three years, takes a sarangi player at least twelve years. In spite of that, all a sarangi player can achieve is to accompany singers. No matter how much a sarangiya has practiced, a vocalist can always defeat him. *Sitar* and *sarod* are independent instruments and the musicians who play these don't have that problem.
>
> This is why I became a singer. It is a much more rewarding profession. Had I continued to play only sarangi, I would have been obliged to accept





> any job with any singer. If he so desired, even a mediocre vocalist could put me down on stage. There is really no respect for this instrument, and even famous sarangi players have not been able to change this.

What Mohammad Hussain expresses is felt by all sarangi players to whom I have spoken. For them the instrument has no scope, no future. Why then should they teach their sons an art which leads to poverty?

KALE KHAN—Another prominent artist was Kale Khan, who learned the art from his eldest brother Azim Bakhsh, and passed it on to the next generation. Little is known about him except that he was a leading sarangi player in Malwa and Rajasthan, where he spent the major part of his life, and where many contemporary sarangi players came under his influence. He died in Jaipur in 1942.

Kale Khan taught many women singers and sarangi players, but his most outstanding disciples were his nephews, Abdul Majid Khan and Amir Bakhsh.[117] The latter also received some training from Alladiya Khan Birtuwala, and was staff artist at All India Radio (Bombay) until his death in 1962, when he was over eighty years old. His nephew, Mohammad Ismail Khan, also an accomplished sarangi player, was employed by AIR as well.

The family tree reveals many other sarangi players, who for reasons of space (and stature) will not be discussed. Mention should be made, however, of Mugna Khan, who also studied under Kale Khan and was employed (along with Ghafur Khan) by the Gandharva Natak Company in 1940. He is one of the ustads of Abdul Latif Khan of Bhopal, today the leading sarangi player of Madhya Pradesh.

Mugna Khan is one of the four surviving players of this old family. The others are Mohammad Hussain Khan, his son Shabir Khan, and Habib Khan. Mohammad Hussain is almost eighty years old and stopped playing sarangi several years ago. He belongs to that generation of sarangi players, born around the turn of the century, when hardly anyone questioned the place of sarangi in classical Hindustani music. In fact, all but one of the descendants of the Jhajjar *khandan* took up the profession of sarangi-playing at that time. Thereafter, a dramatic change took place. A large majority of the offspring began to choose other professions, and the last generation of sarangi players was born between 1925 and 1930. Not a single person of the present generation has received training in sarangi.

In this regard, the Jhajjar *khandan* is hardly an exception to the rule; rather, it represents a general trend in the decline of the sarangi. Within a few decades, the innumerable sarangi players who still inhabited northern Indian cities, towns and even villages at the beginning of the 20th century, were drastically reduced to a handful. No instrument and no community of musicians were hit so badly by the catastrophic changes that overtook Indian music during this century.

5.6 *Portrait of Abdul Majid Khan*

"Many sarangi players agitate vocalists, but Majid Khan was not a man of that type," says D. C. Vedi. "He never disturbed any singer and always tried to give support to them. He was one of the very, very good sarangi players, a man with a cool and balanced nature. In Bombay there was no better sarangi player than Majid Khan."

When I met Khansahib during my very first visit to India, my knowledge of Indian music was limited to what I had heard on current LP's. As a student and admirer of Ram Narayan, I was naturally influenced by his views. Yet, this old (he was then eighty-two) and dedicated musician was to make a deep and everlasting impression on me. Looking back, there is little doubt that he was one of the most sincere musicians I ever met.

Abdul Majid Khan was a humble and quiet man, who led a simple life. He did not like to talk much, preferring to teach instead. To him, the essence of music was in the music itself: everything else was redundant. Although he had lost a leg, he continued to play the sarangi every day. He would never teach without his instrument, nor would he find excuses for himself saying he was not in a mood to play. Khansahib was a passionately optimistic man, whose only resentment was that his strength continued to decrease with age. Sometimes he would complain: "If God would grant me my youth and vigour, I could show the world how to play the sarangi . . ."

For several months I visited him daily and the beautiful music he taught me is engraved upon my memory. Particularly, the old-style *jor* in *raga* Bhimpalasi, which Ustadji learned from Bundu Khan, will always remain one of my favourite pieces of music: probably because it was conveyed with so much love, and also because it is a traditional masterpiece, which reveals the most straightforward and systematic way of developing a *raga*. Like his gurus, Bundu Khan and Alladiya Khan, Ustadji was a man who believed that the core of the music can only be reached through simplicity and total dedication.

Abdul Majid Khan was born in 1888/89, the eldest son of Abdullah Khan. Father and son did not get along very well, so Majid Khan was trained by his uncle, Kale Khan. At the age of seventeen he began performing. During the early days of his career in Indore, Majid Khan's life was pleasant but uneventful. Like most sarangi players, he spent his time accompanying songstresses and enjoying himself.

A major change took place when Bundu Khan visited Indore. Within a few days he became the talk of the town, and it was then that Majid Khan faced the truth, realizing he had been whiling away his time, leading a leisurely existence instead of a life dedicated to music. Recognizing the greatness of Bundu Khan, he decided to become his follower and disciple, much against the wishes of his elders. Over the years, a close friendship evolved between the two sarangi players and whenever there was an opportunity they would be in each other's company.[118]

> Majid Khan was a busy man and always in demand, but his younger brother, Bashir Khan, could spend much more time with Bundu Khan. He was a real disciple of Khansahib, and even in some ways a better sarangi player than Majid Khan. He was always practising, could play any sarangi, and had a sweet and melodious voice as well. Unfortunately, at the peak of his abilities, he became slightly deranged and was sent back to Jhajjar.[75]

The impact of Bundu Khan's music on Abdul Majid Khan can be heard on a 78 r.p.m. record from 1927/28 on which he plays *ragas* Bhimpalasi and Suha Sughrai.[76]

In 1920, Majid Khan decided to settle in Bombay. He arrived on the first of August, the day Lokamanya Tilak died. "As was the custom, he was invited by the local musicians for lunch, after which a music session took place. This was in the compound near the Congress House, the area where most of the songstresses lived. Amongst those present was Seth Gopaldas, an influential and affluent individual, who invited him to meet his paramour, the great vocalist Kesarbai Kerkar. From that day onwards, Kesarbai and Majid Khan always performed together. The voice of Kesarbai and the voice of his sarangi were one."[77] They became the most famous musical pair of this century. On all the recordings of this grand lady, Majid Khan's soft sarangi reproduces the wonderful musical images like an echo.[78] There is always an uninterrupted flow of powerful music, and when the voice halts, the sarangi continues.

Through his long association with Kesarbai, Majid Khan became known as one of the most prominent and reliable sarangi players in Bombay. All the great singers of the time preferred his accompaniment. These included: Abdul Karim Khan (Kirana); Alladiya Khan, Manjhi Khan, Burji Khan, Shankarrao Sarnaik and Mallikarjun Mansur (Atrauli); Abdullah Khan, Faiyaz Khan, Khadim Hussain Khan, Vilayat Hussain Khan, Latafat Hussain Khan, S. N. Ratanjankar and Ram Marathe (Agra); Bhaskarrao Bakhle and his disciples, Master Krishnarao, Dilip Chandra Vedi and Bhai Lal; Shabbu Khan, Baba Nasir, Ramzan Khan and Chand Khan (Delhi); Ramkrishnabua Vaze, Onkar Nath Thakur, D. V. Paluskar, Vinayakrao Patwardhan, Narayanrao Vyas, Ram Manohar Joshi, Manohar Barve and B. R. Deodhar (Gwalior); Rajab Ali Khan, Ganpatrao Devaskar and Amanat Khan (Devas); Mustaq Hussain Khan and Nissar Hussain Khan (Sahasvan); Karamatullah Khan (Jaipur); Rahimuddin Khan Dagar, Pyara Sahib (Calcutta); Master Vasant Amrut (Surat); Mubarak Ali Khan (Sind); Ashiq Ali Khan, Umid Ali Khan and Bade Ghulam Ali Khan (Patiala); Mubarak Ali Khan and Amanat Ali Khan (Bhindibazar).

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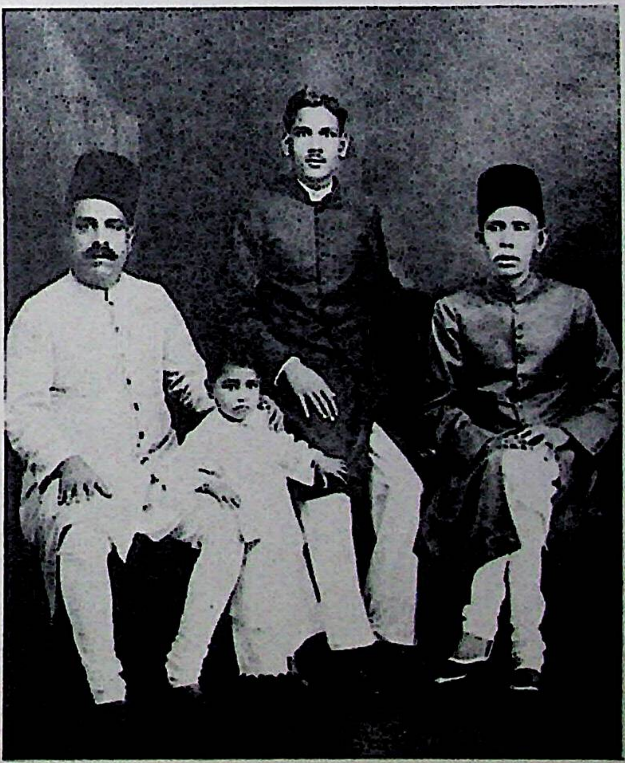
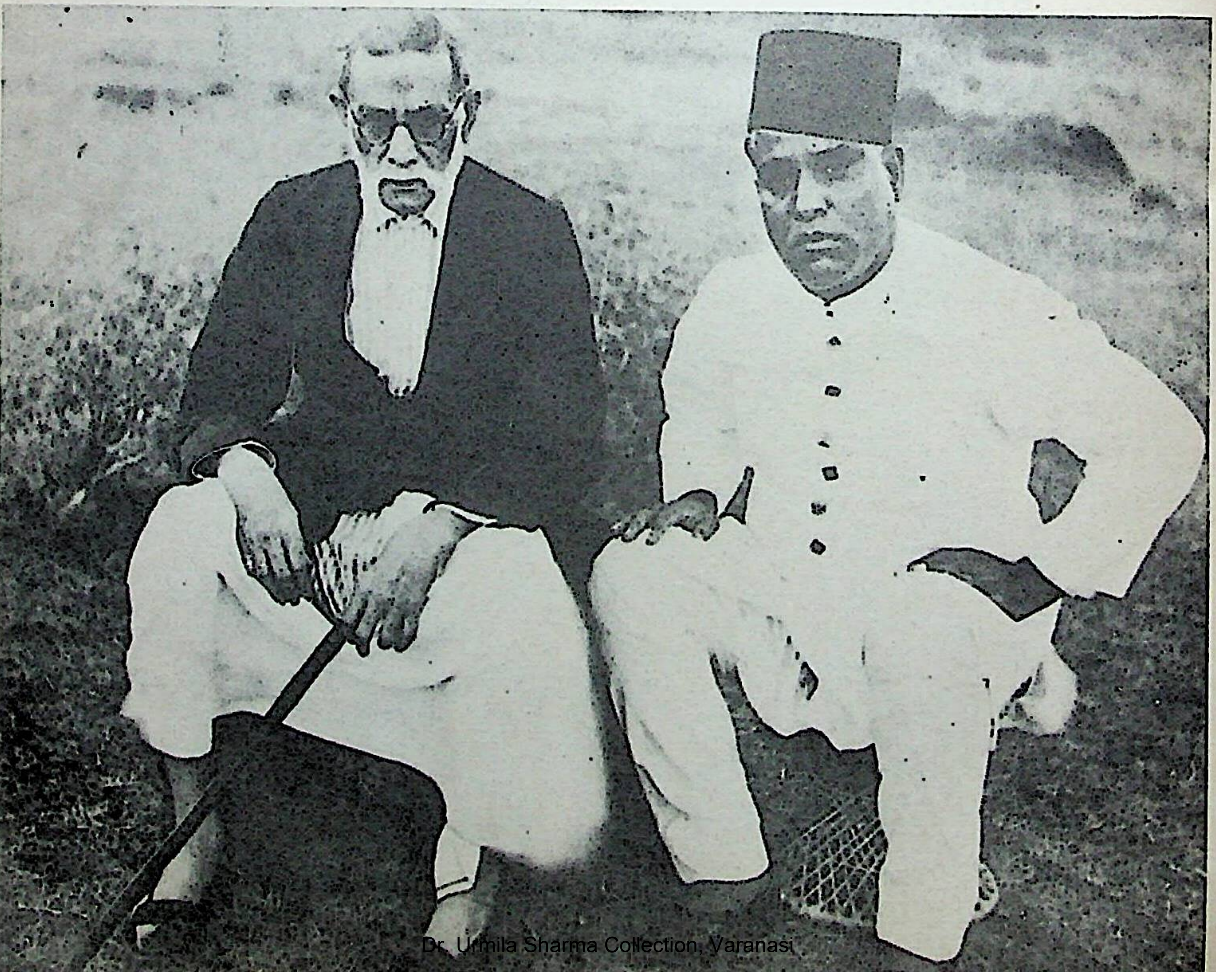


Besides Kesarbai Kerkar, mention should be made of such famous women singers as Gauharjan and Jaddanbai (Calcutta); Rajeshwari, Kamaleshwari, Vidhyadhari, Badi Motibai, Choti Motibai, Rasulanbai, Chandharbai and Siddheshwari Devi (Banaras); Mogubai Kurdikar (Atrauli); Roshanara Begum, Hirabai Barodekar and Gangubai Hangal (Kirana); Begum Akhtar (Faizabad); Sundarabai (Poona); Badi Gauhar (Jaipur); Badi Anjanibai (Malpekar) and Choti Anjanibai (Kalgutkar). When Kesarbai visited Madras, Abdul Majid Khan even accompanied M. S. Subbulakshmi.

It is known that Abdul Karim Khan rarely allowed anyone to play the sarangi with him, and instead preferred the harmonium accompaniment of Shankarrao Kapileshwari. Once, however, when Khansahib was going to sing for All India Radio and his accompanist failed to arrive on time, Majid Khan was requested to replace him. Abdul Karim Khan was so pleased with his sarangi that henceforth he called on Majid Khan.

Faiyaz Khan was also enamoured of Majid Khan's playing, and said he was the only accompanist who could make people applaud. According to Jaddanbai, no sarangi player ever accompanied her so successfully as Abdul Majid Khan. Onkar Nath Thakur used to call him his right hand, and often said to him: "Whenever I sing, your image is always present." On Onkar Nath's early records (released in 1935 and 1950), Majid Khan reveals yet another aspect of accompaniment.[79] Rather than following the voice like a shadow, his sarangi responds to the challenges of the singer. There is a meaningful dialogue which sometimes evolves into an



inspiring controversy, but never does his sarangi overshadow the voice. As a master accompanist, Majid Khan understood that if a sarangi player overpowers a singer, the harmony is destroyed, the joy is gone, and what remains is the noise of clashing egos . . .

By playing with practically all the great vocalists, Abdul Majid Khan was always exposed to the best music. Yet it was the music of Kesarbai which enchanted him most. Indeed, nothing was more impressive and profound, and he decided to become a disciple of her guru, the great Alladiya Khan.[119] Majid Khan was already fifty years old at that time and had behind him a long and successful musical career. Despite this, he was dissatisfied and felt he had to learn more. Once again, like an unassuming student, he sat at the feet of his master.

> He left the house around six or seven in the morning and returned late, never before midnight. He was so engrossed in the music that he spent each moment of the day at Alladiya Khan's side. This went on from 1938 to 1942. He had never sung before and had a very hoarse voice, but after four years of training he was able to give a vocal recital on All India Radio. Kesarbai would tease him, and had a fit of laughter when she first heard him sing. She was deeply impressed, however, by his determination and dedication. So was Professor B. R. Deodhar, who often quoted Majid Khan as a brilliant example of voice training. He would tell his students that, in spite of old age, and through perseverance, Majid Khan was able to mould his voice.[80]

The teachings of Alladiya Khan changed his attitude to music and life, and finally quenched his thirst for knowledge. In all humility Majid Khan would say, "I do not think that there is a single, recognized and traditional *raga* which I have not learned, played or at least heard."

The last phase of Majid Khan's life was mainly dedicated to solo sarangi-playing and teaching.[120] A number of his solo recordings have been preserved by All India Radio, Bombay. When I first heard this music, I was overwhelmed by its almost child-like simplicity. It is devoid of any bravura or show, which is probably one of the reasons why Majid Khan attained little fame as a soloist. Many years later I began to appreciate the beauty and power of this serene music which, I have been told, was also influenced by the sarangi of Khadim Hussain Khan. It transports us to a time when there was no need for hurry, when great musicians searched for purity and ecstasy. There is little doubt that Majid Khan belonged to this category of musicians, which has almost vanished; artists, who were able to realize themselves through their music.

In 1972, at the National Centre for the Performing Arts, Abdul Majid Khan gave his last public performance. He was accompanied by Ahmad Jan Thirakwa on *tabla*. Fortunately, I was present on this historical occasion . . . Five years later, on March 19, 1977, Ustadji died at the age of eighty-eight or eighty-nine.

He married thrice and had seven children, three of whom died prematurely. His two sons, Mohammad Sayid and Rashid Khan, received a thorough training from him in the vocal style of Alladiya Khan. His brother-in-law, Masit Khan (born in 1925), is his main sarangi disciple. He began learning at the age of four from his father, Shamman Khan, and continued with Abdul Majid Khan from the time he was eight. From 1968 until the present day, Masit Khan has been a staff artist at All India Radio, Bombay, and is occasionally invited to give solo recitals. Although Masit Khan is not a direct descendant of the Jhajjar *khandan,* he is now regarded as its most important representative. "No one, except Masit Khan, has a mastery over the traditional *jor* style. All the other sarangiyas play *khayal,*" says Mohammad Hussain Khan. Few people, however, seem to be aware of this.

5.7 *An interview with Ram Narayan*

When the late Abdul Majid Khan listened to a recital of Ram Narayan in the early sixties, he is reported to have said, "as far as virtuosity and tunefulness are concerned, Ram Narayan has even surpassed Bundu Khan." Another old sarangi player commented: "Ram Narayan plays as if his hand is flying. It is so light, so sweet, never stops and is completely drenched in *sur.* This is a gift of God. Even if one were to practise for fifteen hours a day, it would be impossible to reach his standard of playing . . ."[81] Many of his senior colleagues have praised him in similar terms. Ram Narayan is indeed a phenomenon; in his hands, the sarangi has become a truly emancipated solo instrument, released from its confined environment. Furthermore, it was Ram Narayan, with his breathtaking recitals and record albums, who made the sarangi known to the world at large. [121, 122, xiv]

To me, Ram Narayan (born on December 25, 1927 in Udaipur) is one of the few musicians who can show that the classical music of India is both traditional and contemporary, always changing. Traditional, because he adheres strictly to ancient melodic principles. And modern, because during the many years

that I have known and heard Ram Narayan, his music has undergone an astonishing, almost revolutionary development.

Fortunately, Ram Narayan is very much alive today. Whenever I meet him, he radiates the same authority and confidence as he did eighteen years ago, when I became his pupil. There is always that bright, mischievous smile, that joviality and at the same time that inner tension of the artist who wants to surpass himself. Although the story of Ram Narayan's life has been discussed in detail in *Indian Music in Performance,* a book which he wrote together with Neil Sorrell, I requested the maestro to elucidate some of the less-known aspects of his training, career and individualistic approach to the sarangi.[82]

* * *

"It all began with a small sarangi that was left by our Ganga guru. As a young boy of five or six, I felt attracted to this instrument, took a stick and began imitating the sarangi players I had seen—there were many dancing girls and sarangi players in Udaipur in those days. I asked my father to repair the sarangi, and he put strings on it and made a bow. Then he gave me a few lessons, and, after a fortnight or so, I could play the *sargam* pretty much in tune.

"My father, Nathuji Biawat, was not a professional musician. He played a little *dilruba,* but somehow taught me the correct fingering technique for sarangi.[83] This was a unique gift, and, thanks to this, I progressed as fast as I did . . . I could play things with ease, which other sarangi players, using different fingering systems, were unable to produce. For that, I give all credit to my father.

"After a year, my father took me to several sarangi players. One of them was Mehbub Khan of Jaipur, a very good musician who is still alive. Like the other sarangi players he told my father that I had first to change my fingering technique before he could teach me, but my father refused and brought me back home. Nevertheless, I respect Mehbub Khan as a very fine and knowledgeable sarangi player.

"My next guru after my father—I was nine or ten years old—was Udai Lal of Udaipur, an old and very learned sarangi player, who had received training from Allabande and Zakiruddin Khan, the famous *dhrupad* singers. Udai Lalji used to tell me that, over a period of twenty years, he did all kinds of household chores in their home, bringing water from the well, washing their clothes, buying vegetables and so on, and in the remaining time he would practise. He possessed nothing, not even a mirror to shave in. He was a very humble and saintly man, and, at night, he would always go to the Rama temple to play and sing, till four or five in the morning, after which he would return home and go to sleep.

"But the problem was that even at the age of seventy, Udai Lalji thought he had not learned enough. All the time he kept saying. 'I don't know anything. I am still trying to reach the essence of music. How can I find the time to teach you?' So the only way out for me was to sit down quietly, listen to him practise and observe him. At that time I was really very sharp, just like a tape recorder. I would go home, practise what I had heard, and a few days later I would play it for him. Then he would comment, 'All right' or 'Do it like this', and explain a few things. Although he never really taught me, he was always kind enough to confirm that I was developing in the right direction.

"About a year later, Udai Lalji fell ill and died. Soon after that I came into contact with Madhav Prasad, an old singer from Maihar. I began travelling around with him, serving him, and later on accompanying him. But after four years I returned to Udaipur to check if what I was playing was the correct style and technique for sarangi. I also began teaching music in a school and earned 50 rupees a month, which was a lot. I became very vain, bought a new bicycle, a watch and smart clothes. Then suddenly, Madhav Prasadji turned up in Udaipur. He asked me what I was doing and I told him proudly, 'I am a teacher and earning a lot of money'. He looked at me and said, 'If you go on like this, every year your salary will increase by five or ten rupees, and after a few years you will earn 75 rupees. Then you will get married, and ultimately when you retire, you will perhaps earn 300 rupees. But as a musician you will be a nobody!' I was shocked by the truth of this statement and asked him, 'When are you leaving?' Then I went to the school to hand in my resignation, and bought a train ticket. The next day we left.

"For six months we travelled to various places where he performed, until he died in Lucknow. I went back to Udaipur but had a tough time because I did not want to go back to the teaching job that I had left earlier. The next year I practised very hard in an old, deserted temple with wonderful acoustics. Often I played till four o'clock in the morning, and only went home to eat in the afternoon and to sleep.

"Before Madhav Prasadji passed away, he had advised me to go to Lahore and try to learn from Abdul Wahid Khan. So, in 1944, I travelled to Lahore, hoping to find a job in a film studio. But the person I was supposed to meet was not there. I felt miserable and was anxious to go back to Udaipur, but I did not even have enough money to buy a train ticket, and had to spend the night in a *dharmashala*. The next morning I decided to go to the radio station and try my luck as a singer! The music producer, Pandit Jivan Lal Mattoo, interviewed me and immediately noticed the grooves in my fingernails. I was a fool to think I could pass for a vocalist. Panditji asked me to sing something anyway, but after fifteen minutes he interrupted and said, 'Why don't you play the sarangi for us?' I played for an hour and several staff artists came to listen to me. When I stopped, they asked me to continue and play another *raga*. To my utter surprise, Panditji offered me a job there and then, and he also found me a room to stay in. He was just like a father to me and helped me very much.

"Luckily, Pandit Jivan Lal Mattoo was one of the foremost disciples of Abdul Wahid Khan, and thanks to his intervention I was able to start learning from Khansahib. But it was not that easy. Abdul Wahid Khan was a very sober, disciplined and religious man, and was basically against teaching and performing in public. One had to surrender completely to learn from him. In the end he taught me four *ragas*: Yaman, Bhairav, Puria and Patdip, and whenever I had to broadcast a particular *raga*, he would tell me to write down the *chalan* and develop the *raga* on these lines. And it worked! He would say, 'If you know how to move up and down in the scale of a *raga*, and stay within that range, nothing can go wrong'. He was a truly great master.

"My four gurus gave equally good things to me. Whenever I think about them and what they taught me, I feel content and peaceful. They were really marvellous people. My father gave me the fundamental fingering for sarangi and Udai Lalji taught me the basics of *dhrupad-dhamar*. And the systematic approach to *khayal* of Madhav Prasadji and Abdul Wahid–Khansahib were extremely useful for my further development as a soloist.

"In playing *alap* and *jor,* I have also been influenced by Ziauddin Khansahib (the father of Z. M. Dagar), who taught me a little bit. Although he was well-known in Udaipur, I had never heard him sing until 1945, when he gave a concert in the house of Hirabai. All the important musicians of Lahore were present. He began singing Marva and for an hour he was only expounding three notes: *Dha, Ni* and *Re.* Everyone was overwhelmed and some people were actually crying . . . This was real music!

"In Lahore there were at least twenty superb singers such as Abdul Wahid Khan, Bade Ghulam Ali Khan, Chote Ghulam Ali, Barkat Ali, Ashiq Ali Khan, Umid Ali Khan, Dilip Chandra Vedi, Bhai Lal, Mubarak Ali, Ghulam Rasul, Qadir Faridi, Niaz Hussain Shami, Bibe Khan, Hirabai, Mukhtar Begum, Inatibai Dheruwali, and so on. Every day four or five good singers would broadcast on the radio and I thoroughly enjoyed playing with them. Musically speaking it was a fantastic time.

"But there were not many good sarangi players in Lahore, except for Haider Bakhsh Fallusa, a staff artist of HMV, who was very good in light classical music, and Ahmadi Khan who was related to the famous *tabla* player, Nathu Khan. He was a moody and carefree person, smoked a lot of hashish, but was a wonderful sarangi player. Baba Ghulam Mohammad, a staff artist at All India Radio, was technically not so good, but a very knowledgeable and fine person.[84]

"After Partition in 1947, I went to Delhi and continued working for two years at AIR, accompanying singers. Although I enjoyed this work, I got the same feeling I had when I was a school teacher in Udaipur. I thought to myself, 'If I stay here much longer, my own creativity will die.' This feeling first manifested itself when I played with Amir Khansahib in 1948. He sang a composition in *drut ektala* in *raga* Gujari Todi. I don't know what came over me, but when he began singing *tanas,* I put down my bow and listened to him attentively. When he reached *sam,* I started playing the same *tanas,* literally forcing him to listen to me. We were equal artists and the musicians who were present applauded my effort. The majority of singers, however, maintained that the accompanist should remain subdued. I thought, if there is so much music in me, why should I stay in the background, remain a slave, and get more and more frustrated?

"Following the advice of Onkar Nath Thakur, Krishnarao Shankar Pandit, Hirabai Barodekar and Gangubai Hangal, I moved to Bombay in 1949. Krishnaraoji, in particular, was helpful in introducing me to Bombay audiences and if I played well, Pandit Onkar Nath would encourage me to come to the fore. (If I did not play well, he would insult me on stage! This was his nature. He was a great man). These musicians had a very different attitude to the accompanist. And thanks to celebrated artists like Alladiya Khan, Kesarbai, Rajab Ali Khan and Aman Ali Khan, the concert-goers in Bombay were musically receptive. They understood what I was doing, and I received a lot of love and appreciation from them.

"Gradually I began to develop into a soloist. In 1950 I made three 78 r.p.m. records on which I played Gujari Todi, Marva, Lalit, Puria Kalyan, Gunkali and Pilu. The sound technician was a Britisher who bullied everybody and made me very nervous. For each recording he gave me just an hour, but in spite of that I am still quite satisfied with the results. And in 1951, Vilayat Khan and I recorded the first LP's made in India.[85] Three years later, I gave my first solo recital for a large audience, but it was a disaster. I had to play before the main item, which was a *jugalbandi*, and the audience, impatiently waiting for this spectacle, drove me off the stage by hissing and booing. Naturally I was very upset, and for days I hardly ate or slept. After some contemplation, however, I decided that I should not give up at this point but rather persevere. It took me two years, however, before I had the courage to make another attempt in this direction, but this time the audience responded very favourably. Slowly I began to give up accompaniment, and after touring with Nazakat and Salamat Ali Khan in the early sixties, I stopped completely. From then on, I was accepted as a soloist.

"There is one thing I would like to emphasize. Sarangi players are generally much more alert and versatile than other musicians, because they have accompanied all kinds of vocalists—from *baijis*, *qawwals* and *thumri* singers to *khayal* and *dhrupad-dhamar* singers. They have to tune and retune their instrument four or five times a day, and, because of that, I think, they have a deeper understanding of tunefulness and intonation. Tuning a sarangi is not a waste of time. One always learns something and penetrates deeper into the subtle world of sound. It is not easy to tune the sarangi perfectly. It only happens to me once in a while, when the circumstances are optimal, when I am in a good and peaceful mood, and when I have time to concentrate.

o play solo sarangi, one must have a good knowledge of *ragas, talas*, current styles and forms, and total control over both the right and the left hand. All these things I have learned, either from my gurus or by experience on the stage. And other things I have invented. To give you a few examples: some forty years ago I was the first to fix the keynote to F sharp, and everybody, including Gopal Mishra and Shakur Khan, followed me in this respect. I also began using a slight vibrato, and started playing *gamak* in a different way, using both hands. Normally, one plays *tanas* consisting of separate notes with either separate bow strokes or in one, long bow. I have developed a particular style of playing *tanas* with double notes, and, while playing, I make all kinds of rhythmical variations with my bow. I use four octaves, I have paid a great deal of attention to bringing out the perfect sound of the sarangi, and have come to understand how one should use the right hand.

"When you play the open strings, there is always a slightly different sound from the up or down bow. One has to be very careful, therefore, to apply the same pressure everywhere, otherwise the continuity of sound will be broken. Bowing is extremely important and there should be a certain system to it. If you play a *tana* in one bow, you have to understand what will happen if you play it in two bows, or three bows and so on. You should know when to use an up or down bow, and when to change the bow. This is the way I have studied it.

"It is very difficult to play solo sarangi. If one has mastered only one style,it is impossible to play for two or three hours and hold the attention of the listener. One has to know many styles and be able to make all kinds of variations. The sarangi is a fabulous instrument and I have tried to get as much as possible out of it, without going against its nature. I don't use my left hand unnaturally, or use my bow the way our Indian violinists do. I have always remained very traditional and faithful to the style of the sarangi."

* * *

To conclude, sarangi players can be great virtuoso performers (as accompanists or soloists) and teachers. They may be acknowledged as traditionalists, as innovators, or as a combination of both. What matters most is that the music they play be a true reflection of their temperament and soul. Indian music has taught me that irrespective of fame, a musician can be great only if he is great as a person.

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NOTES

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25. Komal Kothari, Report from Rajasthan, *NCPA Quarterly Journal VI (1),* 1977: 20.

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27. K. S. Kothari, op. cit., p. 76.

28. Ibid., pp. 77-78.

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30. C. R. Day, *The Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India and The Deccan,* London 1891: 127. Day depicts a 'northern' sarangi with fifteen resonance strings, whereas R. N. Brouncker (or an Indian artist working under his direction), a century earlier, has drawn a similar instrument with only nine [68-71].

Chapter 2

1. Shahinda (Begum Fyzee-Rahamin), *Indian Music,* London 1914: 56. S. Bandyopadhyaya, *Musical Instruments of India,* Varanasi 1980: 58.

2. The sarangi I play was bought by my friend Wim van der Meer in 1970 for only fifty rupees.

3. Neil Sorrell and Ram Narayan, *Indian Music in Performance*—A practical introduction, Manchester 1980: 53.

4. The terminology for parts of the sarangi differs from one sarangi player to another.

5. Ram Narayan was the first to use harp strings on his sarangi, but today an increasing number of artists follow his example.

6. It is not uncommon to find a sarangi with two or three small pegs inserted into the left side of the second pegbox.

7. Ram Narayan only uses the first tuning (*chargha*) and never departs from it.

8. Neil Sorrell and Ram Narayan, op. cit., p. 61.

9. Hafizullah Khan, for instance, uses this fingering.

10. Rajesh Bahadur, personal communication: 28-1-1983.

11. This common sarangi *palta* is taught by Hanuman Prasad Mishra to his students.

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Chapter 3

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9. C. Sachs, *Die Musikinstrumente Indiens und Indonesiens,* Berlin und Leipzig 2/1923: 84-85.

10. David K. Rycroft, Musical bow, in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Vol. 12,* ed. Stanley Sadie, London 1980: 811.

11. *Rigveda viii, 69, 9.* See: A. A. Macdonell and A. B. Keith, *Vedic Index of Names and Subjects,* Delhi 2/1967: 524. S. Sörensen, *An Index to the Names in the Mahabharata,* Delhi 2/1963: 550-51. The one-stringed *pinjana,* which is mentioned by Abhinavagupta (11th century), may have been a musical bow as well. See: M. Ramakrishna Kavi and J. S. Pade, eds. *Natyasastra, with the Commentary of Abhinavagupta, Vol. IV,* Baroda 1964: 122.

12. Apparently Shiva's original musical creation, the musical bow, was first replaced by a harp and thereafter by a monochord stick zither. Later in history, this process was to repeat itself, when the origin of the *rudra vina* was thought to be connected with Shiva. In other words, the instruments which this divine musician played over the course of time represent major steps in the evolution of Indian stringed instruments.

13. *Ramayana vi, 24, 42-43. Srimad Valmiki Ramayana* (*with Sanskrit text and English translation*), *III,* Gorakhpur 1969: 1451.

14. M. Ramakrishna Kavi, King Nanyadeva on music, *Quarterly Journal of the Andhra Historical Research Society 1(2),* 1926: 55-63. C. P. Desai, *Bharata-Bhashya* of Nanyadeva, *Lakshya Sangeet 5(3),* 1958: 45-48. P. L. Sharma, A critical note on Nanyadeva's *Bharata-Bhashya, Nada Rupa I(1),* 1961: 220-24.

15. *Bharatabhashya, ff. 364-65* (Poona manuscript). Premlata Sharma, Personal communication.

16. M. Ramakrishna Kavi, *Bharatakosa,* Tirupati 1951: 370. E. te Nijenhuis, personal communication.

17. *Sangitaratnakara 6, 402-11.* S. Subrahmanya Sastri, ed., *The Samgitaratnakara of Sarngadeva, Vol. III,* Madras 1951.

18. *Sangitaratnakara 6, 412-15.*

19. M. Ramakrishna Kavi, 1926, op. cit., p. 407.

20. *Sangitaraja iii, 1(2), 38-47.* Premlata Sharma, personal communication.

21. Abu'l-Fazl 'Allami, *The A'in-i Akbari, Vol. III,* transl. by H. S. Jarrett, New Delhi 2/1948: 269.

22. F. Baltazard Solvyns, *Les Hindoûs, Vol. II,* Paris 1810: No. 6(6).

23. Henry Balfour, *The Natural History of the Musical Bow,* Oxford 1899: 54. S. M. Tagore, *Short Notices of Hindu Musical Instruments,* Calcutta 1877: 29-30: "*Pinaka,* a one-stringed instrument played with the tips of the fingers [sic]; said to be the father of all stringed instruments. It is known to have been invented by the Hindu God Shiva".

24. H. Balfour, op. cit., p. 63.

25. Jaap Kunst, *Hindoe-Javaansche Muziek-Instrumenten,* Weltevreden 1927: 21-24. According to this scholar the *wina rawanahasta* was a lute, but it is more likely that it was either a harp or a musical bow in Java as well.

26. V. Premalạtha, *Music through the Ages,* Delhi 1985: 180-81. Nampi Arurar (9th century) also refers to Ravana's musical accomplishments in his songs:

    > Ravana [sang] the Vedic songs to the tune of the strings of his hands... He sang divine music... The Lord heard the sweet music of these songs of great ideals... All this was the work of God... The sinner who had to die was given a [new] lease on life...

    See: M. A. Dorai Rangaswamy, *The Religion and Philosophy of Tevaram, Vol. I,* Madras 1958: 302.

    A. A. Bake writes about this popular legend as follows: "During one of his periods of *tapas* when he tried to force the Gods, especially Shiva, to grant him another boon, he used the strains of a certain stringed instrument so effectively, that the mountain Kailasa shook on its foundations and the Gods were seriously perturbed. By means of a certain stratagem, however, they destroyed the strings of his instrument and believed themselves safe, but Ravana pulled some sinews from his forearm and went on playing as before. Hence that instrument is called *ravanahasta* or Ravana's arm". See: A. A. Bake, A Javanese musicological puzzle, in *Bingkisan Budi,* Leiden 1950: 24-26.

27. H. C. Bhayani, personal communication. It is very unlikely that this *ravanahatthaya* was a harp, because by the 9th century A.D. harps had become virtually obsolete in Indian music.

28. According to Alain Daniélou (in a letter to W. Bachmann, dated 5-9-1967), Abhinavagupta (11th century) mentions the *ravanahasta* as a folk instrument which is not suitable for classical music.

29. S. Krishnaswami Ayyangar, *Sources of Vijayanagar History*, Madras 1919: 291.

30. W. Caland, *Ziegenbalg's Malabarisches Heidenthum*, Amsterdam 1926: 229.

31. R. R. Diwakar, ed., *Bihar through the Ages*, Bombay 1959: 469.

32. Pierre Sonnerat, *Voyage aux Indes Orientales et à la Chine. Vol. I*, Paris 1782: 102-103. *Pandarams* were the highly revered priests and chief singers of the Tamil Vedas *(Tirumurais)* and *Devaram* hymns, which were originally accompanied by the *kaittalam* (cymbals) and *vinai* or *yal*. Obviously, at the time of Sonnerat, the *Pandarams* played the *ravanahasta*, whereas today in the Nelliyapar temple in Tirunelveli a bowed instrument made of bamboo, called *sarangi-pani*, is used. V. Premalatha, op. cit., pp. 178-79, 189.

33. F. J. Fétis, *Histoire Générale de la Musique, Vol. II*, Paris 1869: 185-332.

34. F. J. Fétis, *Notice of Anthony Stradivari*, London 2/1864 (1/1856): 9.

35. C. Sachs, op. cit., pp. 112-15. F. W. Galpin, Additional note on the harp and flute in India and on the Indian origin of the violin bow, in *The Legacy of India*, ed. G. T. Garratt, London 1937: 327-34.

36. So far, we have not been able to obtain the description of the *ravanahasta* in the *Uddisamahamantrodaya*, a tantric text which may be older than the *Bharatabhashya*. See: M. Krishnamachariar, *History of Classical Sanskrit Literature*, Delhi 3/1974: 841-42.

37. *Manasollasa 16, 4, 579-80.* G. K. Srigondekar, ed., *Manasollasa, Vol. III*, Baroda 1961.

Chapter 4

1. Shahinda (Begum Fyzee-Rahamin), *Indian Music*, London 1914: 55-56. Tarlekar mentions Hakim Bakarat Gau as the inventor of the sarangi. G. H. Tarlekar and N. Tarlekar, *Musical Instruments in Indian Sculpture*, Pune 1972: 48.

2. Hafizullah Khan, personal communication: 1974.

3. C. Sachs, *Die Musikinstrumente Indiens und Indonesiens*, Berlin und Leipzig 2/1923: 119. Jean Jenkins and Poul Rovsing Olsen, *Music and Musical Instruments in the World of Islam*, London 1976: 39.

4. Abdul Halim Sharar, *Lucknow: The Last Phase of an Oriental Culture*, transl. and ed. by E. S. Harcourt and Fakhir Hussain, London 1975: 140. Daniel M. Neuman, *The Life of Music in North India*—The organization of an artistic tradition, New Delhi 1980: 121, 133-35.

5. C. Marcel-Dubois, *Les Instrument de Musique de l'Inde Ancienne,* Paris 1941: 91. W. Bachmann, *The Origins of Bowing and the Development of Bowed Instruments up to the Thirteenth Century,* London 1969: 18.

6 Abu'l Fazl 'Allami, *The A'in-i Akbari, Vol. III,* transl. by H. S. Jarrett, New Delhi 2/1948: 269. The similarity in shape between the *rabab* and the sarangi is obvious in Kashmir.

7. Shahab Sarmadee, personal communication. Suresh Vrat Rai informs us that the sarangi also appears in the poetry of Swami Haridas, Kabir and Paramanand. Unfortunately, he does not quote the relevant passages. S. V. Rai, Sarangi in the modern context, *Sangeet Natak 71,* 1984: 29.

8. Shahab Sarmadee, personal communication. The Persian word for bow is *gaz* or *tir* (lit. arrow).

9. Mohammad Karam Imam, Melody through the centuries (*Ma'dan-ul Mousiqui*), transl. by G. Vidyarthi, *Sangeet Natak Akademi Bulletin 11-12,* 1959: 17.

10. The latter is more likely. While Saif Khan was a great authority on music, Abu'l Fazl was not. Moreover, part of the *Ragadarpan* is a Persian translation of Raja Man Singh's famous treatise, *Mankutuhal,* and part of it an original contribution by the writer himself. It is not unlikely, therefore, that Raja Man of Gwalior (or another medieval musicologist whose work has become obsolete) had already written about the sarangi at the turn of the 16th century.

11. Shahab Sarmadee and Premlata Sharma, personal communication. Sharangadeva mentions the sarangi together with *alapini* as *sarangyalapini* in a long list of *vinas,* which concludes a discourse on ensembles: *Sangitaratnakara 3, 214.* S. Subrahmanya Sastri, ed., *The Samgitaratnakara of Sarngadeva, Vol. II,* Madras 2/1959: 199.

12. Jineshvarasuri, *Kathakoshaprakarana,* ed. Muni Jinavijaya, Singhi Jain series 11, 1949: 30. See: H. C. Bhayani, Some earliest literary references to the sarangi, *NCPA Quart. Journ. XI (1),* 1982: 37-38.

13. Lakshmanagani, *Supasanahachariya,* ed. H. T. Sheth, 1919. H. C. Bhayani, 1982, op. cit.

14. H. C. Bhayani, *NCPA Quart. Journ. X(1),* 1981: 49-50.

15. M. Ramakrishna Kavi, *Bharatakosa,* Tirupati 1951: 721. In the *Basavapurana* of Palkuriki Somanatha (13th-14th century) mention is made of the *saranga vina,* together with the *ravanahasta vina, pinaki vina, kinnari vina,* etc. This author refers to the same (?) instruments in his *Panditaradhyacharita* as *saranga, pinaka, ravana, kinnara,* etc. See: V. Raghavan, Music in Palkuriki Somanatha's works, *Journal of the Music Academy Madras XIV,* 1943: 140-41.

16. H. G. Farmer, *Studies in Oriental Musical Instruments—First Series,* London 1931: 62; *Second Series,* London 1939: 79-80.

17. Shahab Sarmadee, personal communication: *I'jaz-i Khusrawi,* 2nd *risala,* 9th *khatt,* 3rd *harf.*

18. S. Qudratullah Fatimi, *Amir Khusrau's Contribution to the Indus-Muslim Music,* Islamabad 1975: 8, 11.

19. Abu'l Fazl, Vol. III,op. cit., pp. 268-69. Note that both the *kinnara* and *kingra* had evolved from a monochord stick zither with one upper gourd into a two-stringed *vina* with two gourds, like the present-day Punjabi *king*. In the 19th century, the term *kinnari vina* was applied to a kind of *sitar* with a resonator made of an ostrich egg. See: S. M. Tagore, *Short Notices of Hindu Musical Instruments,* Calcutta 1877: 20.

    Guru Amardas (1479-1574) uses the image of the *kingri* in the following song:

    > O bard! strike such strains on your [*kingri*],
    > That it emits the celestial melody of the Word,
    > And the devotee gets attuned to his Lord.

    Adi Granth, p. 908. See: Daljit Singh, *Sikh Sacred Music,* New Delhi 1967: 59. G. S. Mansukhani, *Indian Classical Music and Sikh Kirtan,* New Delhi 1982: 97.

20. S. Q. Fatimi, op. cit.

21. Shahab Sarmadee, personal communication. An old saying goes: "Gone are the days of *rag-rang,* when *kingri* playing was a pleasure. Now only three things matter: salt, oil and wood for fuel."

22. Folk musical instruments of India, *Sangeet Natak 11,* 1969: 6, 8, 20, 22, 30-31.

23. C. Sachs, op. cit., p. 122.

24. Jean Jenkins and Poul Rovsing Olsen, op. cit., p. 39.

25. W. Bachmann, op. cit., p. 48.

26. Ibid., p. 64. L. E. R. Picken, Early Chinese friction-chordophones, *The Galpin Society Journal xviii,* 1965: 86. R. F. Wolpert, Einige Bemerkungen zur Geschichte des Streichinstruments in China, *Central Asiatic Journal XVIII(4),* 1974: 253-64.

27. Interestingly, Hayat Mohmad Langa, son of the late Nur Mohmad, represents the seventeenth generation of a family of professional singers and sarangi players. Devidas, the first prominent musician of this lineage, must therefore have been a contemporary of the anonymous, but immortalized artist depicted in the painting. Komal Kothari, The Langas—A folk musician caste of Rajasthan, *Sangeet Natak 27,* 1973: 8.

28. (1) The Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York), No. 13. 228.46; (2) Victoria and Albert Museum (London), I.S. 93-1960; (3) Indian Museum (Calcutta), No. R. 210. N. Ray, *Mughal Court Painting,* Calcutta 1975: plate XIII, reproduces the last painting.

29. Frank Harrison and Joan Rimmer, *European Musical Instruments,* London 1964: 35.

30. C. Sachs, *The History of Musical Instruments,* New York 2/1968: 365.

31. C. Sachs, 1923, op. cit., p. 110.
32. H. Goetz, *The Indian and Persian Miniature Paintings in the Rijksprentenkabinet (Rijksmuseum) Amsterdam,* Amsterdam 1958: 25.
33. The British Museum has an unfinished copy of the same painting (BM. 1921-10-11-05). See: Norah M. Titley, *Miniatures from Persian Manuscripts*—A catalogue and subject index of paintings from Persia, India and Turkey in the British Library and the British Museum, London 1977: 404 (120).
34. Norah M. Titley, op. cit., 395 (63).
35. Ibid., 404 (53). In the British Museum copy, the instrument has no pegbox.
36. Shashibushan Das Gupta, *Obscure Religious Sects,* Calcutta 3/1969: 369. George W. Briggs, *Gorakhnath and the Kanphata Yogis,* Calcutta 1938: 24.
37. G. S. Mansukhani, op. cit., p. 94.
38. Daljit Singh, op. cit., p. 61.
39. G. S. Mansukhani, op. cit., p. 103.
40. Ibid.; the *dhadh* is a small-sized *dhol.*
41. J. T. F. Jordens, Medieval Hindu devotionalism, in *A Cultural History of India,* ed. A. L. Basham, London 1975: 266.
42. Robert Coverte, *A True and Almost Incredible Report of an Englishman, that Travelled by Land through many unknowne Kingdomes, and great Cities,* London 1612: 47.
43. Niccolao Manucci, *Storia do Mogor or Mogul India, 1603-1708, Vol. II,* transl. by W. Irvine, Calcutta 2/1966 (1/1907): 411.
44. Richard F. Burton, *Sindh and the Races that Inhabit the Valley of the Indus,* London 1851: 303.
45. Abu'l Fazl, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 271. See note 19.
46. G. S. Mansukhani, op. cit., p. 97.
47. Kenneth Bryant, *Poems to the Child-God*—Structure and strategies in the poetry of Surdass, Berkeley 1978: 151. Abu'l-Fazl, *The A'in-i Akbari, Vol. I,* transl. by H. Blochmann, Delhi 2/1965: 681-82; Vol. III, op. cit., p. 271. M. K. Imam, op. cit., p. 14.
48. Ibrahim Adil Shah II, *Kitab-i-Nauras,* ed. Nazir Ahmad, New Delhi 1956: 143 (song No. 46).
49. Shahab Sarmadee, *Mankutuhal* and *Rag Darpan*—Reflections of a great seventeenth century scholar-musician, *ISTAR Newsletter 3-4,* 1984-85: 23.
50. Ibid., pp. 23-24. M. K. Imam, op. cit., pp. 13-17.
51. Abu'l Fazl, Vol. III, op. cit., pp. 271-72.
52. D. M. Neuman, op. cit., pp. 129-35. "It is still unclear", writes Neuman (p. 133), "why Dharis were subsumed socially and terminologically in the Mirasi fold, but I think it was due to the ambiguity of the social tag 'Dhari'

with a now double social identity split between Kalawant and Mirasi". He continues to quote a popular story about Sadarang, which intimates that virtually all instrumentalists, including *binkars, rababis* and *tanburis* were accompanists! "The story of Sadarang is revealing in other ways and suggests the history of social separation between accompanists and soloists [vocalists] . . . the former being subordinate to the latter", concludes Neuman. Apparently, he did not have the source at his disposal which shows that the legend has no historical foundation (see p. 65). We are surprised, however, that he refers neither to Sanskrit musicological literature nor to the sculptures and the paintings, which clearly reveal that, long before Sadarang, instrumentalists were both soloists and accompanists. Neuman perhaps does not realize that *kalanwats* or *kalawants* already existed at the time of Amir Khusrau and, like the *dhadhis* later on, were "swarming about the soldiers chanting songs of manly and war-like deeds" *(Tughlaq Nama,* see: S. Q. Fatimi, op. cit., p. 8). Obviously, *kalawants* and *dhadhis* (and more recently *mirasis)* were professional minstrels with a similar origin. Later in history, however, *kalawants* became the elite of the musical world: *dhrupad* singers and *binkars* from established families of musicians with a deep knowledge of the traditional repertoire. Many *dhadhis* had a profound musical background as well, and, as Faquirullah and Imam reveal, there were numerous great vocalists, composers and instrumentalists belonging to this class. We will see that *mirasi* families also recruited many famous singers, first-rate vocal teachers, and solo sarangi and *tabla* players. I have been told that even Haddu and Hassu Khan were *dhadhis* or *mirasis,* and believe that if the line of descent of vocalists was to be thoroughly traced, very few could maintain their claim to being *kalawants*.

Imam observed in the 19th century that "there are many musicians who call themselves *kalawants* but their claims are baseless." Why then does Neuman cling to a seemingly artificial distinction between *mirasis* and *kalawants* a century later, when the term *kalawant* has virtually become obsolete? Why does he earmark sarangi players only as accompanists, when certainly in the last two centuries a respectable number of such artists were acknowledged as soloists? Why does he talk about *tabla baj,* when everyone else in India speaks about *tabla gharanas?* Several such questions arise when I read Neuman's fascinating anthropological account of Hindustani music culture.

53. N. Manucci, Vol. II, op. cit., p. 72.

54 Abu'l Fazl, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 272.

55. Abu'l Fazl, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 682. Neither S. P. Verma nor J. Andrew Greig found Akbar paintings depicting a sarangi, but a bowed instrument resembling a sarangi with a bowl-shaped resonator forms part of the orchestra in a Jahangir painting from 1605, which shows a processional scene and is reproduced by Percy Brown, *Indian Paintings under the Mughals, A.D. 1550 to A.D. 1750,* Oxford 1924: plate XXXI. See: Som Prakash Verma, *Art and Material Culture in the Paintings of Akbar's Court,* New Delhi 1978: 60-70. J. Andrew Greig, Musical instruments of Akbar's court, *Journal of Asian Culture IV,* 1980: 154-77.

56. R. C. Temple, *The Travels of Peter Mundy, in Europe and Asia, 1608-1667, Vol. II,* London 1914: 217.

57. N. Manucci, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 182.

58. Shahab Sarmadee, op. cit., p. 22.

59. Ibid. Faquirullah describes two prominent *khayal* singers, Raja Idsing Gor and Raja Ramshah of Kharagpur, who were "well-versed in the style of Amir Khusraw and Husayn Shah Sharqi." A. Halim, Origin and evolution of Khiyal in Pak-India, *Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society V (1),* 1959: 108; *Essays on History of Indo-Pak Music,* Dacca 1962: 60-75.

60. Shahab Sarmadee, op. cit., p. 24.

61. D. M. Neuman (op. cit., p. 134) and several other authors take this for granted. He writes: "The beginnings of *khayal,* closely associated with the rise of sarangi and *tabla* accompaniment, coincides with acceptance of the *bin* as a solo instrument." See note 52.

62. A. Halim, 1959, op. cit., p. 110.

63. T. Jaideva Singh, The evolution of khyal, in *Commemoration Volume in Honour of Dr. S. N. Ratanjankar,* Bombay 1961: 132. Wim van der Meer, *Hindustani Music in the 20th Century,* The Hague 1980: 56-59. M. R. Gautam, *The Musical Heritage of India,* New Delhi 1980: 40-56. M. V. Dhond, *The Evolution of Khyal,* New Delhi (no date): 5, 12. Najma Perveen Ahmad, *Hindustani Music*—A study of its development in seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Delhi 1984: 107-124.

64. Dargah Quli Khan Bahadur, *Muraqqa-e-Dihli* (Persian), 1739; translated into Urdu by Khwaja Hassan Nizami, *Purani Dihli ke Halat,* Delhi 2/1949: 66-67. Thanks are due to Allyn Miner for making the English translations available to me.

65. Ibid., p. 67. Allyn Miner, personal communication.

66. Inayat Khan Rasikh, *Risala-e-Zikr-e-Mughannian-e-Hindustan,* ed. S. A. Haider, Patna 1961: 30. See: N. P. Ahmad, op. cit, p. 122, 166.

67. Khwaja Hassan Nizami, op. cit., p. 69.

68. Ahobala, *Sangitaparijata II, 59-61,* (ed. R. S. Gondhalekhar, 1897).

69. Ibid., II, 120-28. According to H. G. Farmer (op. cit., First Series, p. 100), "the term *rawawa* as the name of a lute does not appear to be used in any Persian work on music." R. K. Shringy notes that *ravavaha* also occurs in the *Sangitapatha*. His interpretation of the *rabab* as a bowed instrument does not carry conviction, since the term *kona* usually means stick or plectrum, and rarely bow. Presumably the anonymous author of *Sangitapatha* borrowed the name *ravavaha* from Ahobala. See: R. K. Shringy, Two Sanskrit manuscripts on vocal and instrumental music, *Nada Rupa II,* 1963: 96-98.

70. Norah M. Titley, op. cit., No. 380.

71. Shahab Sarmadee conveys that the following instruments are mentioned in the *Sakinamah: tambur, rubab, duf, tabl, nay, nafir, kamancha, 'ud,*

jantar, mandal, tal, qanun, chang, dotar, etc. Ibrahim Adil Shah II mentions the following instruments in his *Kitab-i-Nauras* (op. cit., p. 107, song No. 19): *tambura, rubab, jantar, kamancha, chang, dholak, daf, huduga, tal, mridang, shahnai, pawa, khalu, upang.*

72. Kedarnath Mahapatra, *A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit Manuscripts of Orissa in the Collection of the Orissa State Museum, Vol. II,* Bhubaneswar 1960: clii-clvii.

73. *Gmelina arborea* Roxb. (*gambhari*), *Artocarpus integrifolia* L. (*panasa, kathal*) and *Shorea robusta* Gaertn. (*sal, sakhu*).

74. *Sangitanarayana II, 34-43;* published by the Orissa Sangeet Natak Akademi, Bhubaneswar 1966. The following terms are used: *shira* (head), *gala* (throat), *danda* (neck), *kroda* (chest), *sarigrha* (pegbox), *motani, sari* (peg), *charman* (skin), *makari* (bridge), *tantri, guna* (string), *dhanush* (bow) and *niryasa* (resin).

75. John Burnell, *Bombay in the Days of Queen Anne,* to which is added *Burnell's Narrative of his Adventures in Bengal,* eds. S. T. Sheppard and W. Foster, Nendeln/Liechtenstein 2/1967: 130. If the bowed instrument indeed resembled a 'Georgian violin' it must have been a *kamancha.*

76. J. S. Stavorinus, *Reize van Zeeland over Kaap de Goede Hoop, naar Batavia, Bantam, Bengalen, enz., Vol. II,* Leyden 1793: 43.

77. W. Ouseley, Anecdotes of Indian music, in *Hindu Music from Various Authors,* ed. S. M. Tagore, Varanasi 3/1965: 171.

78. S. Q. Fatimi, op. cit., p. 11.

79. Frank Harrison, *Time, Place and Music*—An anthology of ethnomusicological observation c. 1550 to c. 1800, Amsterdam 1973: 150. Ella Zonis, *Classical Persian Music*—An introduction, Cambridge, Massachusetts 1973: 181, calls this fiddle a *ghaychek (ghichak).*

80. F. B. Solvyns, *Les Hindoûs, Vol. II,* Paris 1810: No. 7 (4).

81. Mildred Archer, Baltazard Solvyns and the Indian picturesque, *The Connoisseur,* January 1969: 12-18.

82. Baltazard Solvyns, *A Catalogue of 250 Coloured Etchings; descriptive of the Manners, Customs, Character, Dress, and Religious Ceremonies of the Hindoos,* Calcutta 1799.

83. F. B. Solvyns, 1810, op. cit., No. 7 (5).

84. S. M. Tagore, 1877, op. cit., p. 2.

85. Faquirullah, *Ragadarpan;* Shahab Sarmadee, personal communication.

86. S. M. Tagore, 1877, op. cit., p. 9.

87. F. B. Solvyns, 1810, op. cit., No. 7 (3).

88. Mildred Archer, *Company Drawings in the India Office Library,* London 1972: 64.

89. An interesting paper about the asymmetrical placement of the bridge in sarangis and other bowed instruments is written by Paolo Ansaloni: The

acoustic dynamics of bridges of bowed instruments (An outline of comparative instrument-making). *The World of Music 1/1982*: 35-55.

90. N. Augustus Willard, *A Treatise on the Music of Hindoostan,* reprinted in *Hindu Music from Various Authors,* ed. S. M. Tagore, Varanasi 3/1965: 96.

91. Ibid., pp. 96-97, 34.

92. This latter tuning corresponds to what Captain C. R. Day has to say on the subject. See: C. R. Day, *The Music and Musical Instruments of Southern India and The Deccan,* London 1891: 125. W. Bachmann (op. cit., p. 54) observes that Central Asian three-stringed instruments and medieval fiddles were tuned similarly.

93. C. Sachs, 1923, op. cit., p. 120.

94. Captain Meadows Taylor, Catalogue of Indian musical instruments, presented by Colonel P. T. French, *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy IX (1),* 1864-66: 115. Also published in S. M. Tagore, 3/1965, op. cit., pp. 257-58.

95. B. H. Baden Powell, *Hand-Book of the Manufactures and Arts of the Punjab,* Lahore 1872: 276. C. R. Day, op. cit., p. 125.

96. F. J. Fétis, *Histoire Générale de la Musique, Vol. II,* Paris 1869: 298-99. V. C. Mahillon, *Catalogue Descriptif & Analytique du Musée Instrumental du Conservatoire Royal de Musique de Bruxelles, Nos. 1 à 576,* Gand 2/1893 (1/1880): 130.

97. Ethel Rosenthal, *The Story of Indian Music and its Instruments,* London 1928: 30-31. A. M. Meerwarth (1917) observes that the sarangi has fifteen sympathetic strings, but reproduces an instrument with twenty-six, whereas H. A. Popley (1921) states that there are from fifteen to twenty-two, and includes a photograph of an artist playing a 'modern' sarangi with thirty-five resonance strings! See: A. M. Meerwarth, *A Guide to the Collection of Musical Instruments Exhibited in the Ethnographical Gallery of the Indian Museum,* Calcutta 1917: 9. H. A. Popley, *The Music of India,* Calcutta 2/1950 (1/1921): 110-11.

98. Among the musicians of the Jhajjar *khandan,* Azim Bakhsh (c. 1857-1908) seems to have been the first to play a large sarangi. See p. 140.

99. C. Sachs, 1923, op. cit., p. 122.

100. This gradual development in the increase of the number of *tarabs* was also confirmed by Hanuman Prasad Mishra of Banaras, who has preserved the instruments of his father, grandfather and great-grandfather. The latter's sarangi is a small instrument with 9 resonance strings; that of his grandfather has 22 resonance strings divided into two sets, and his father's sarangi, as well as his own, conforms to the type now in vogue, having 35 resonance strings.

101. F. B. Solvyns, 1810, op. cit., No. 7 (3).

102. N. A. Willard, op. cit., pp. 94-95.

103. C. R. Day, op. cit., p. 125.

104. R. C. Temple, op. cit., p. 216.

105. W. H. Moreland and P. Geyl, *Jahangir's India—The Remonstrantie van Francisco Pelsaert,* Cambridge 1925: 83. I have taken the liberty to change the translation where I felt it did not agree with the original Dutch text. See: D. H. A. Kolff en H. W. van Santen, *De Geschriften van Francisco Pelsaert over Mughal Indië, 1627—Kroniek en Remonstrantie,* 's-Gravenhage 1979: 333.

106. Abu'l Fazl, Vol. III, op. cit., p. 272.

107. N. Manucci, Vol. I, op. cit., p. 189.

108. J. Pinkerton, *A General Collection of the Best and Most Interesting Voyages and Travels, Vol. VIII,* London 1811: 163-64.

109. N. Manucci, Vol. II, op. cit., pp. 312-14.

110. W. Irvine, *Later Mughals, Vols. 1 & 2,* New Delhi 2/1971: 193-94.

111. Khwaja Hassan Nizami, op. cit., pp. 90-91. I am indebted to Allyn Miner for these translations. See note 64.

112. Ibid., pp. 89-90.

113. Ibid., pp. 84-86.

114. W. Irvine, op. cit., p. 371.

115. Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali, *Observations on the Mussulmauns of India, Vol. I,* London 1832: 195-96. "A few of these [nautch] girls can play the native guitar or violin tolerably well", writes John Shortt, The Bayadère; or, dancing girls of southern India, *Memoirs Anthropological Society of London, Vol. III,* London 1870: 193. A. H. Sharar, op. cit., p. 145, writes about the *domnis*: "But Lucknow society was more affected by *domnis* than by any of these people. In towns of all sizes from time immemorial, *mirasans* and *jagnis* have attended weddings as singers. Their performances never vary. The *domnis* on the other hand were great innovators. Giving up *dhols* they adopted *tablas, sarangis* and cymbals, as was the practice with male and courtesan musicians. They advanced from mere singing to dancing as well and, not content with this, started to give personifications in the manner of *bhands* at female festivities. They became the most important feature of all wedding celebrations and so fascinated the ladies of wealthy families that there was no household which did not employ a troupe of *domnis.* As they were unequalled at dancing and singing, female celebrations became much more lively and interesting than those of men. Their witticisms and innovations were so entrancing that most men had a strong desire to get some chance of witnessing their performances—but the *domnis* themselves were averse to dancing and singing before a male audience. There are still a large number of *domnis* here who perform in the traditional way, but the quality of their performance has been lost. It is unlikely that there have been singers anywhere else to equal the accomplished *domnis* of Lucknow."

116. Mrs. [J.] Kindersley, *Letters from the East Indies,* London 1777: 229-32. Also published in K. K. Dyson, *A Various Universe,* Delhi 1978: 336.

117. F. B. Solvyns, 1810, op. cit., Nos. 2(1), 7(2). Mrs. Meer Hassan Ali, 1832, op. cit., pp. 195-96. Mrs. [M. M.] Sherwood, *The Life of Mrs. Sherwood,* (chiefly autobiographical), ed. S. Kelly, London 1854: 423.

118. James Forbes, *Oriental Memoirs, Vol. I,* London 1813: 81.

119. T. D. Broughton, *Letters Written in a Mahratta Camp during the Year 1809,* London 1813: 191-92.

120. Charles Doyley, T. Williamson & F. W. Blagdon, *The European in India,* London 1813: plate XV.

121. Emily Eden, *Up the Country—Letters written to her sister from the Upper Provinces of India,* ed. E. Thompson, London 1930: 101.

122. Mrs. S. C. Belnos, *Twenty-four Plates Illustrative of Hindoo and European Manners in Bengal,* London 1832: plate 17. E. S. Fenton, *The Journal of Mrs. Fenton,* ed. H. Lawrence, London 1901: 243.

123. Robert Smith, *Pictorial Journal of Travels in Hindustan from 1828 to 1833, Vol. I,* unpublished manuscript, Victoria and Albert Museum, London, I.M. 15-1915, pp. 309-14.

124. N. A. Willard, op. cit., p. 5.

125. F. B. Solvyns, 1810, op. cit., No. 2(1).

126. F. Buchanan, *An Account of the District of Bhagalpur in 1810-11,* Patna 1939: 579. A. H. Sharar, op. cit., p. 145, also refers to *mirasans* as female entertainers, but D. M. Neuman, op. cit., pp. 129-33, has shown that later in the 19th century the meaning of the term *mirasi* changed, and came to stand for *dhadhi.* E. Rosenthal, op. cit., p. 41, quoting Havelock Ellis (*The Dance of Life*), says that "*ramedjenis*" are "the dancers of the street". Other authors, however, refer to *ramjanis* as Hindu temple dancers. See: H. Yule and A. C. Burnell, *Hobson-Jobson,* ed. W. Crooke, London 2/1903: 774.

127. K. K. Dyson, op. cit., pp. 344, 347-48.

128. James Tod, *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, Vol. III,* ed. W. Crooke, London 1920: 1709.

129. *Radha Govind Sangitsar, Vol. II,* ed. B. T. Sahasrabuddhe, Poona 1910: 8.

130. B. L. Sharma, Contribution of Rajasthan to Indian Music, *Journal of the Indian Musicological Society 2(2),* 1971: 32-47. Chandramani Singh, Performing artists from Amber and Jaipur, in *Cultural Contours of India—Dr. Satyaparkash Felicitation Volume,* ed. V. S. Srivastava, New Delhi 1981: 324-28. Joan L. Erdman, *Patrons and Performers in Rajasthan*—The subtle tradition, Delhi 1985: 74-116.

131. A. H. Sharar, op. cit., pp. 31, 34.

132. M. K. Imam, op. cit., pp. 17, 19.

133. Ibid., pp. 21, 25.
134. Ibid., pp. 20, 24, 25.
135. Ibid., p. 24.
136. A. M. Meerwarth, op. cit., p. 9.
137. C. R. Day, op. cit., pp. 93, 97, 125.
138. G. H. Ranade, *Music in Maharashtra,* New Delhi 1967: 28. B. Trimbak Sahasrabuddhe, *Hindu Music and the Gayan Samaj,* Bombay 1887. Even in this century the sarangi could occasionally be found in the south: "The only stringed instrument used in the temples at Tirunelveli, Tenkasi and Courtallam is the sarangi. It is used by the *oduvar* as an accompaniment to his own hymnal music or to the hymns of the *Tevaram* sung by another *oduvar.* This sarangi has four strings and there are no sympathetic strings," writes P. Sambamoorthy, *South Indian Music, Vol. V,* Madras 2/1963: 227.
139. A. H. Sharar, op. cit., pp. 137-38.
140. Amir Hasan, *Palace Culture of Lucknow,* Delhi 1983: 114.
141. A. H. Sharar, op. cit., p. 63. M. K. Imam, op. cit., p. 26.
142. K. K. Dyson, op. cit., pp. 281, 283.
143. W. H. Sleeman, *A Journey through the Kingdom of Oude in 1849-1850,* London 1858: lxi, lxxv-lxxvi.
144. M. Edwardes, *The Orchid House,* London 1960: 155.
145. W. H. Sleeman, op. cit., p. lxi.
146. M. K. Imam, op. cit., p. 25.
147. N. A. Willard, op. cit., pp. 91-92.
148. *Sentinel,* Feb. 1893. See: K. Ballhatchet, *Race, Sex and Class under the Raj,* New Delhi 1980: 157.
149. Captain Thomas Skinner, *Excursions in India, Vol. I,* London 1832: 70-74.
150. W. Crooke, *The Tribes and Castes of the North-Western Provinces of Oudh,* 4 Vols., Calcutta 1896. See: Vol. I: 245, Vol. II: 379, Vol. IV: 364. W. Crooke, Prostitution, in *Hastings' Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics, Vol. X,* 1918: 406. R. V. Russell and R. Bahadur Hira Lal, *The Tribes and Castes of the Central Provinces of India, Vol. III,* London 1916: 373.
151. Amir Hasan, op. cit., p. 119.
152. Mirza Ruswa, *The Courtesan of Lucknow—Umrao Jan Ada,* transl. by Khushwant Singh and M. A. Husaini, Delhi 1961.
153. B. H. Baden Powell, op. cit., p. 270.
154. K. Ballhatchet, op. cit., p. 159. See also: F. A. Marglin, *Wives of the God-King*—The rituals of the devadasis of Puri, Delhi 1985: 6-8.
155. Amir Hasan, op. cit., p. 120.

156. Joep Bor, Memories of an old sarangi player, *ISTAR Newsletter 3-4,* 1984-85: 6-8.

157. Ajit Parmar, The gharana girls, *Probe India,* June 1984: 37-40.

158. C. Sachs, 1968, op. cit., pp. 405-407.

159. Jnan Ghosh, Harmonium as a solo instrument, *Sangeet Natak 20,* 1971: 22.

160. H. S. Banerji, *Translator's Explanation and Notes to Krishna Dhan Banerjee's Gita Sutra Sar, Vol. II, Part II,* Calcutta 1941: 116. On p. 32 the author writes: "In spite of all this handicap in the training of the voice, it can be observed, that amongst professional Hindustani songstresses, who generally do not use the *tambura* (and of them, those who have not yet adopted the harmonium, but have their songs accompanied by the *saringi,* which is the Indian fiddle), there are many, who have not totally lost, but do retain a part of the natural sweetness of their voices. From this it may be inferred what great injury to the voice is done by the harmonium. Though so injurious, yet the harmonium is gradually being adopted by all classes of singers in India, whether ustads or pupils."

161. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *Thirty Songs from the Panjab and Kashmir*: Recorded by Ratan Devi, London 1912: 6.

162. E. Clements, *Introduction to the Study of Indian Music,* London 1913: vii.

163. A. H. Fox Strangways, *The Music of Hindostan,* Oxford 1914: 163-64.

164. E. Clements, op. cit., pp. 7, 10, 82, 90-96.

165. E. Rosenthal, op. cit., p. 32.

166. B. A. Pingle, *History of Indian Music,* Calcutta 3/1962 (1/1894): 103-4.

167. Ibid., p. 108.

168. D. C. Vedi has probably confused two artists with the same name because, according to B. K. Roy Choudhury, Sadiq Ali Khan was a son of the illustrious *dhrupad* singer and *rababi,* Jaffar Khan (a descendant of Bilas Khan), who was also the inventor of the *sursringar.* This Sadiq Ali was a court musician of the raja of Banaras, and an excellent *rabab* player and *binkar.* He was an erudite scholar as well and wrote *Sharmayahi Ishrat* (Delhi 1875). "He lived like a saint and . . . could not tolerate the music of lighter moods".

    The other Sadiq Ali Khan was a reputed *khayal* singer (of the Qawwal Bache *gharana*) and the 'originator' of Lucknowi *thumri.* He was the teacher of another fascinating personality, Khurshed Ali Khan (c. 1852-1950) who was a known singer and *ustad,* and, I have been told, a good sarangi player as well. See: B. K. Roy Choudhury, Tansen's descendants in Varanasi, *Nada Rupa I(1),* 1961: 86-88. S. K. Chaubey, *Musicians I Have Met,* Lucknow 1958: 38-43. S. Mishra, *Great Masters of Hindustani Music,* New Delhi 1981: 48-53.

169. AIR's seminar on the harmonium, *Sangeet Natak 20,* 1971: 5.

170. Ibid., p. 8. It is questionable whether this statement represented Amir Khan's own opinion about the sarangi. After all, his father was a sarangi player and from time to time he played the instrument himself. Ram Narayan accompanied him on several occasions, and Amir Khan is also said to have

been the teacher of several sarangi players, among them Munir Khan and Sultan Khan, both from Sikar.

171. Ibid., p. 15.

172. D. M. Neuman, op. cit., p. 138.

173. AIR's seminar on the harmonium, op. cit., pp. 17-18.

174. Ibid., p. 11.

175. D. C. Vedi, personal communication.

176. *The Stage Lover* (no date), cited by H. P. Krishna Rao, My name is Gauhar Jan, *The Indian Music Journal II(1),* Mysore 1912: 15.

177. Joep Bor, My name is Gauhar Jan, *ISTAR Newsletter 2,* New Delhi 1984: 4-6. Badi Gauharjan of Jaipur was another well-known singer. See Joan L. Erdman, op. cit., pp. 106-109.

178. S. Mishra, op. cit., p. 176.

179. S. G. Banerjee, *The Princes and the Dancing Girls,* Varanasi 1967.

180. J. S. Jariwalla, *Abdul Karim—The Man of the Times,* Bombay 1973: 8.

181. V. H. Deshpande, *Indian Musical Traditions*—An aesthetic study of the gharanas in Hindustani music, Bombay 1973: 55.

182. D. M. Neuman, op. cit., p. 63.

183. Niaz Ahmed Khan, personal communication.

184. D. M. Neuman, op. cit., pp. 102-103.

185. Wim van der Meer, op. cit., p. 157.

186. J. S. Jariwalla, op. cit., p. 48.

187. D. C. Vedi, personal communication. Another informant told me that he learned from Bahram Khan.

188. V. H. Deshpande, op. cit., p. 67.

189. S. N. Ratanjankar, *Pandit Bhatkande,* New Delhi 1967: 12-15.

190. S. Mishra, op. cit., p. 169.

191. D. C. Vedi, personal communication.

Chapter 5

1. Nor did I tape-record their observations (as I do today) for the simple reason that I could not afford such a luxurious machine; and even if I had possessed one, I doubt whether I would have dared to put it in front of them.

2. In musical parlance the following distinction was made: sarangi players who accompanied male vocalists and played solo were commonly addressed as *sarangiya,* whilst ordinary sarangi players who accompanied *tawaifs* and *baijis* were called *safarda.*

3. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, Indian music, in *The Dance of Shiva,* rev. edit., New Delhi 1976: 88.

4. D. C. Vedi, personal communication.

5. Ibid.

6. As one musician remarked: "Don't waste your time listening to these ordinary sarangi players. They don't even remember the names of their grandfathers or great-grandfathers, and you are asking them about the great masters! Had you come here before 1947, you would have met the right people and received the correct information."

7. Daniel M. Neuman, The social organization of a musical tradition: Hereditary specialists in North India, *Ethnomusicology XXI(2)*, 1977: 237.

8. One informant told me that his full name was Haider Ali Bakhsh, and it is not impossible that Ali Bakhsh from Delhi, mentioned by Imam (1856), was the same artist. When one hears the name Haider Bakhsh one should be cautious, however, since there were many sarangi players of the same name, such as the earlier-mentioned artist from Chaproli, Haider Bakhsh Firishtiwala, Haider Bakhsh Fallusa and Haider Bakhsh Khan from Udaipur.

9. Mohammad Sayid Khan, personal communication.

10. Someone else told me that it was Haider Bakhsh's sarangi which was carried in a palanquin.

11. Mohammad Sayid Khan, personal communication.

12. Ibid.

13. Mohammad Hussain Khan, personal communication.

14. There exists one 78 r.p.m. record of this artist: *Prof. Badal Khan (Khalifa)—Saringee*: 1 Suha, 2 Bhairav Bahar; Megaphone, Calcutta, JNG 116.

    After hearing this record, Ram Narayan, in particular, expressed his doubts about Badal Khan's accomplishments as a sarangi player:

    > Once I was in Calcutta and an old Bengali gentleman talked to me about Badal Khan, lavishing praise on him as one of the greatest sarangi players. I was quite curious and requested him to play Badal Khan's record. Believe me or not, he was only playing a *lahara*, nothing more.

    I have heard this record only once, and considering the fact that Badal Khan was about a hundred years old, and had probably stopped practising several decades before he was recorded, I cannot but be impressed. Yet, Ram Narayan's opinion should not be taken lightly.

15. Suresh Vrat Rai, *Sarangi* (in Hindi), Lucknow 1982: 107-111.

16. Argus, The sarangi and its exponents, *Hindustan Standard*, Calcutta: 23-8-1959.

17. I have not yet been able to ascertain whether Bunda Khan and Buniad Hussain Khan were one and the same.

18. H. K. Roy Chowdhury, *The Musicians of India (Illustrated), Part I*, Ramgopalpur (Mymensingh) 1929: 50.

19. Ibid., p. 51. Besides Wazir Khan, the chief court musician, and Buniad Hussain Khan, the Rampur *darbar* was adorned by such great masters as Fida Hussain (*sarod* player), Hafiz Khan (*sitar* player), Mustaq Hussain Khan

(an all-round vocalist), Haider Khan (*khayal* singer) and Nasiruddin Khan (*dhrupad* singer). See: B. K. Roy Choudhury, the Senia gharana of Rampur. *Sangeet Natak 29,* 1973: 6-7. The author also informs us that Buniad Hussain was in Gwalior before he joined the court of Rampur.

20. H. K. Roy Chowdhury, op. cit., pp. 51-52.

21. Mohammad Rashid Khan, personal communication.

22. Alain Daniélou, *A Catalogue of Recorded Classical and Traditional Indian Music,* Paris (1952?): 43.

23. Mohammad Rashid Khan, personal communication. He also informs us that his 78 r.p.m. record does not give a fair impression of his playing:

    Khadim Hussain—Sarangi: 1 Dinki Puria, 2 Sindhi; The National Gramophone Record Mfg. Co. Ltd., Bombay, Young India DA 6958.

24. D. M. Neuman, *The Life of Music in North India*—The organization of an artistic tradition, New Delhi 1980: 122. Wim van der Meer, *Hindustani Music in the 20th Century,* The Hague 1980: 157. See also: Bonnie C. Wade, *Khyal*—Creativity within North India's classical music tradition, Cambridge 1984: 33-35.

25. *Jhire Khan—Sarangi*: 1 Lalit, 2 Bhairavi; The Gramophone Co. Ltd., Dum Dum, HMV N 5949.

26. Mohammad Hussain Khan, personal communication.

27. There were several other well-known sarangi players with the name Sabir or Sabri Khan. Ghulam Sabir of Kanpur was the accompanist of Akhtaribai (Begum Akhtar) and can be heard on all her old Megaphone records. Sabri Khan of Moradabad is today one of the leading sarangi players who regularly performs abroad and has been affiliated with All India Radio, Delhi, since 1942.

28. Rajesh Bahadur, personal communication.

29. His fabulous accompaniment can be heard on the following LP: *Great Master, Great Music—Khansahib Bade Ghulam Ali Khan*: 1 Shuddha Sarang, 2 Megh Malhar, Pahadi *thumri*; The Gramophone Co. of India Ltd., Dum Dum, HMV EALP 1364.

30. Chand Khan, Shams-mousiqui Ustad Mamman Khan (in Urdu), *Sangeet Sabha & Sursagar Society,* Delhi 1969. Daniel M. Neuman, op. cit., p. 156, also quotes from an article by Chand Khan. It is said that Sangi Khan was a disciple of the sarangi player Amir Khan of Delhi.

31. Samman Khan was a vocalist.

32. D. M. Neuman, op. cit., p. 157, gives the names of other teachers of Mamman Khan. It is generally known, however, that he did not actually learn from Imdad Khan, but was influenced by his *sitar* style and therefore accepted him as his guru. Neither did he learn from Chajju Khan, who had challenged and defeated him: not as a sarangi player but on theoretical grounds. For this reason, Mamman Khan also accepted him as a guru. However, when Chunda Azim Bakhsh, a famous sarangi player from Meerut and a good friend of Mamman Khan, heard about this humiliating incident, he became so outraged that he travelled all the way to Bombay to take revenge.

On arrival, Chajju Khan asked him politely how the journey had been and how many stops he had made, at which Chunda Azim Bakhsh promptly replied : "I came directly from Meerut to Bombay and did not notice any stops!" It is said that after he accompanied Chajju Khan, the latter had to admit that he could not be defeated as a sarangi player.

33. Chand Khan, op. cit.

34 Which 'modern' sarangi? We have seen that the large classical sarangi evolved during the 19th century, and that a century earlier, there was little difference between certain types of Rajasthani folk sarangis and 'classical' sarangis. Besides, according to Chand Khan, Mamman Khan's grandfather and his paternal great-grandfather were alive during the Mutiny, and not contemporaries of Emperor Mohammad Shah. Neuman's information, therefore, carries little conviction.

35. Rajesh Bahadur, *Selected Recordings of a Sarangi Recital by the Late Ustad Bundu Khan,* The National Programme of All India Radio: 16-2-1973.

36. Ibid.

37. Bundu Khan told this story to various people I have met. There is a remarkable similarity between his story and the one told by Ram Narayan about his own beginnings as a sarangi player.

38. Bundu Khan used to say about his guru: "I have heard him practise for forty years." It could be that Bundu Khan did not receive much formal training from Mamman Khan, but learned mainly through listening.

39. Mohammad Rashid Khan, personal communication.

40. Ibid.

41. Anonymous, *The Father of Music*—The late Ustad Bundu Khan (in Urdu), Karachi (no date).

42. Mohammad Rashid Khan, personal communication.

43. Bunde Khan, *A Sample of Sangit Vivek Darpan* (in Hindi), Delhi 1934: 20.

44. Bundu Khan's fingering technique has been discussed in chapter 2.4. Interestingly enough, Ram Narayan told me that for his first 78 r.p.m. records he also used a steel wire. Later on, however, he realized that for his music a gut string was more appropriate.

45. Rajesh Bahadur, op. cit.

46. Bunde Khan, op. cit.

47. His close friend and disciple, Abdul Majid Khan, strongly believed that musicians should play or sing, and not write about music. He and other colleagues must have discouraged Bundu Khan from publishing *Sangit Vivek Darpan.*

48. Joep Bor *et al.*, Notating Hindustani music, *ISTAR Newsletter 3-4,* 1984-85: 29-42.

49. Rajesh Bahadur, op. cit.

50. Ibid.

51. Ibid.

52. *Bundu Khan—Sarangi*: 1 Malkosh, 2 Jaunpuri; The Musical Products Ltd., Madras, Broadcast B2169 (c. 1934).

    Ustad Bundu Khan—Sarangi: 1 Malkosh, 2 Darbari Kanada; The Gramophone Co. Ltd., Dum Dum, HMV HT 83 (1948).

    Ustad Bundu Khan—Sarangi: 1 Miyan ki Malhar, 2 Bhairavi; The Gramophone Co. Ltd., Dum Dum, HMV HT 84 (1948).

    Ustad Bundu Khan—Sarangi: 1 Des, 2 Chander Kauns; EMI (Pakistan) Ltd., Karachi, HMV EKDR 8 (1971).

    Ustad Bundo Khan—Sarangi Nawaz: 1 *Raag* Sagar, Darbari, 2 Bhopali, Pilu, Bilawal Bahar; EMI (Pakistan) Ltd., Karachi, HMV LKDE 20004 (1974).

    Other recordings can be found in private collections and the archives of All India Radio, but they are difficult to obtain.

53. Rajesh Bahadur, op. cit.

54. Rajesh Bahadur, personal communication.

55. Rajesh Bahadur, 1973, op. cit.

56. M. K. Imam, Melody through the centuries (*Ma'dan-ul Mousiqui*), transl. by G. Vidyarthi, *Sangeet Natak Akademi Bulletin 11-12*, 1959: 25.

57. Ibid.

58. Norvin Hein, *The Miracle Plays of Mathura*, Delhi 1972: 32-33.

59. Argus, op. cit.

60. S. Mishra, *Great Masters of Hindustani Music*, New Delhi 1981: 163.

61. D. C. Vedi, personal communication.

62. S. V. Rai, op. cit., pp. 19-24.

63. D. C. Vedi, personal communication.

64. S. V. Rai, op. cit., p. 101.

65. Anjanibai Malpekar, Pandit Azim Bakhsh Khansahib and his excellent tradition, *Khansahib Abdul Majid Khan Felicitation Night*, Bombay 1968.

66. Mohammad Sayid and Rashid Khan, personal communication.

67. Ibid.

68. Mohammad Hussain Khan, personal communication.

69. The terms *jor, bin,* or *tantra ang* refer to the old, instrumental style of playing *alap*. Nowadays, the term *jor* is used in a more limited sense and only indicates the second part of the *alap*. Mamman Khan was one of the first sarangi players to specialize in *gayaki ang*, whereas sarangi players from Banaras in particular were exponents of *tappa ang*. In a style of playing referred to as *bolbant*, the artist expressed the words of the song and their appropriate meanings. Banne Khan of Meerut was famous for this style,

which was particularly suitable for accompanying the light songs of women singers.

70. Mohammad Sayid Khan, personal communication.

71. K. T. Deshmukh, Bal Gandharva, *Sangeet Natak 9,* 1968: 63.

72. Keshavrao Bhole, The contribution of stage music to the growth of popular music, *Sangeet Natak 15,* 1970: 46.

73. Mohammad Hussain Khan, personal communication.

74. Ibid.

75. Mohammad Sayid Khan, personal communication.

76. *Majid Khan—Sarangi*: 1 Bhimpalasi, 2 Suha Sughrai; Columbia Gramophone Co. Ltd., London, GE 1552 (c. 1927/28).

    Majeed Khan—Sarangi Solo: 2 Durga and Bhupali; The Musical Products Ltd., Madras, Broadcast BHO 858, B 2147-B (c. 1934).

77. Mohammad Sayid Khan, personal communication.

78. *Surshri Kesarbai Kerkar*: 1 Lalat, Todi, Kukubh Bilawal, Desi, Bhairavi, 2 Lalita Gouri, Nat Kamod, Goud Malhar, Malkauns; The Gramophone Co. of India Ltd., Dum Dum, HMV EALP 1278.

79. *Pandit Omkarnath Thakur*: 1 Desi Todi, Todi, Nilambari, Sughrai, 2 Malkauns; The Gramophone Co. of India Ltd., Dum Dum, HMV 33 ECX 3252. Desi Todi excepted, all the other pieces on this record are accompanied by Abdul Majid Khan.

80. Mohammad Sayid Khan, personal communication.

81. Mohammad Hussain Khan, personal communication.

82. Neil Sorrell and Ram Narayan, *Indian Music in Performance*—A practical introduction, Manchester 1980.

83. Ram Narayan's fingering technique has been discussed in chapter 2.4.

84. According to D. C. Vedi, Bille Khan of Lahore, a disciple of Miyan Jan, was also a very good sarangi player and singer.

85. This LP was released in 1957.

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iv. Hayat Mohmad Langa from Barnawa, Rajasthan, playing the Gujaratan sarangi (*below right; Joep Bor*)

Second cover:

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xiv. Ram Narayan (*below left*)

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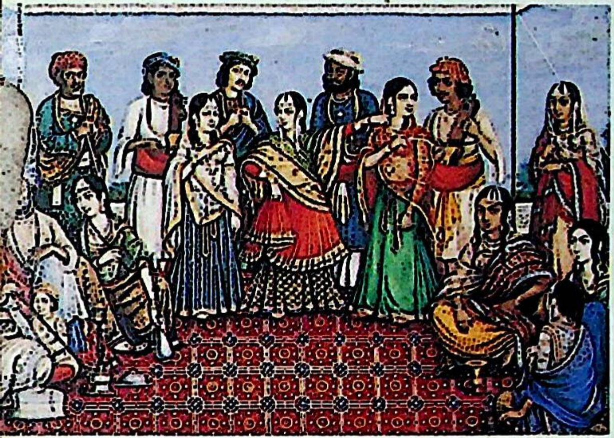

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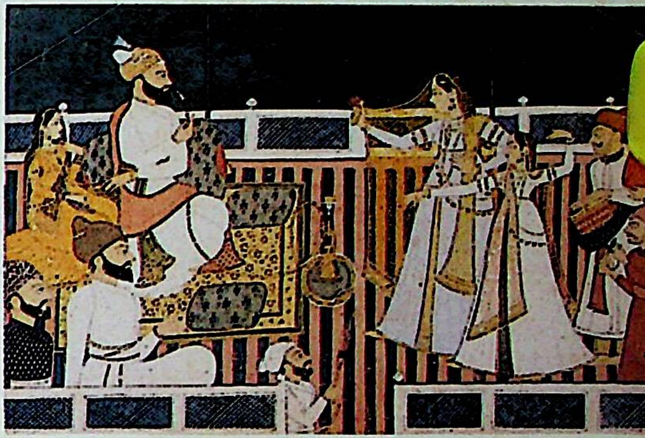

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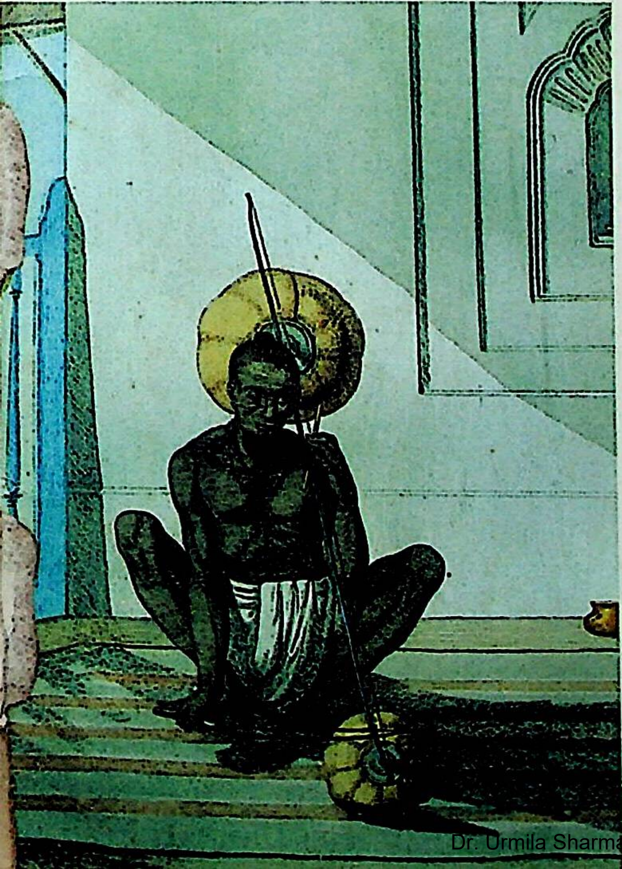

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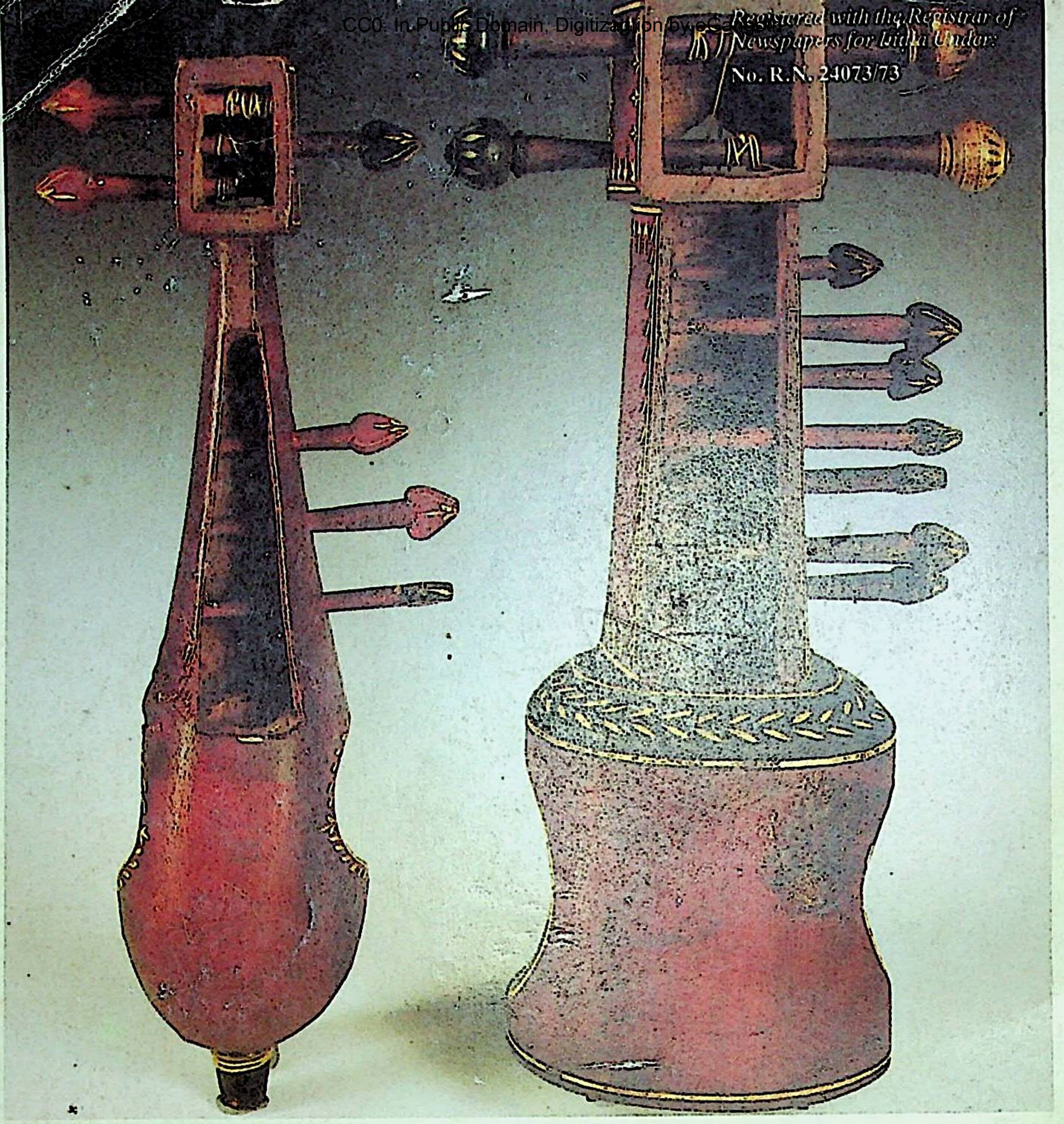

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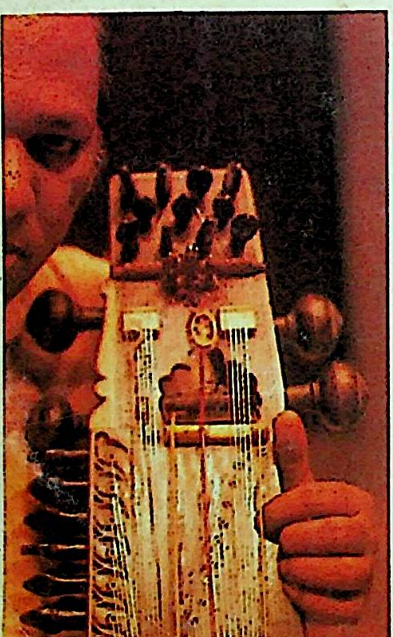

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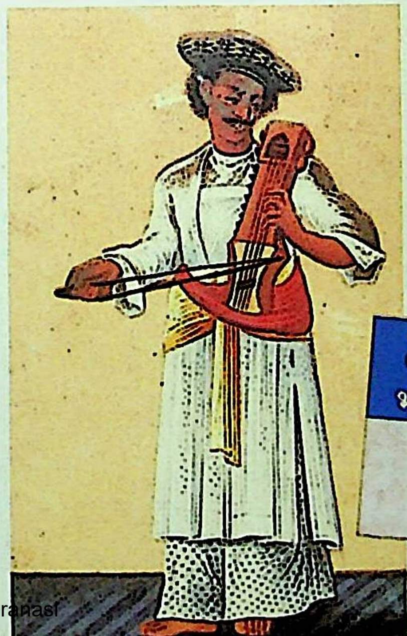

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